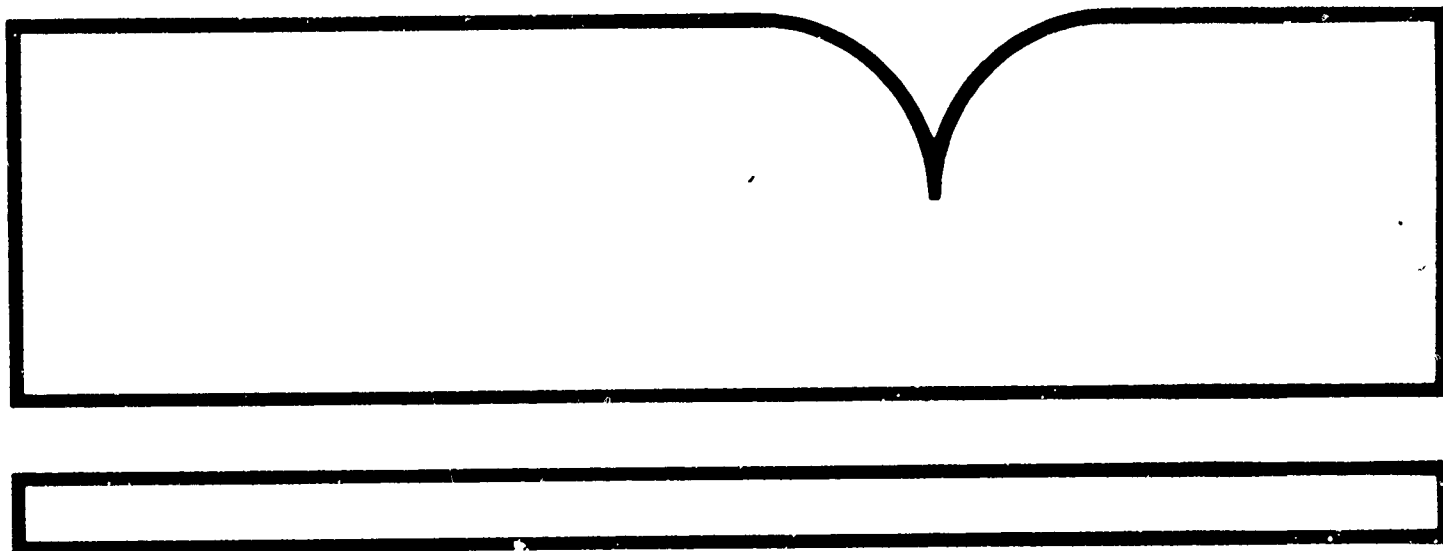


Mailed Fist, Velvet Glove: Soviet Armed Forces as a Political Instrument

Stephen S. Kaplan

Brookings Institution  
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This study was conducted in order to determine the historical record of the use of Soviet armed forces as a political instrument since the Second World War; to gain an understanding of the USSR's readiness to use military power in the pursuit of foreign policy objectives and the willingness of Soviet leaders to accept risks in doing so; to evaluate the utility of political-military operations to Soviet interests and foreign policy goals; and to realize the implications of this Soviet behavior for U.S. interests and American foreign and defense policies. Addressed finally is the subject of circumstances which

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might lead the USSR to use armed forces as a political instrument in the future.

Soviet armed forces were used as a political instrument, as defined, on 187 occasions between June 1944 and June 1979. Soviet military units were used coercively in 155 or roughly four-fifths of these actions. In the remaining 32 operations, cooperative political-military diplomacy was practiced. Two-fifths of the total number of incidents took place between 1967 and 1979.

Soviet armed forces were an uncertain means for achieving specific political objectives abroad. The occurrence of positive outcomes in incidents and their retention for at least a few years varied greatly with contextual circumstances and with how Soviet military power was utilized. The realization of favorable outcomes of a broader quality important to Soviet interests also was problematic.

As a discrete political instrument, Soviet military power was little short of a flop when it was used in specific instances to intimidate regimes not to the Kremlin's liking in Eastern Europe. To reverse political change in this region, military suppression and its accompanying rewards and costs were necessary. Moscow did achieve its operational objectives vis-a-vis Peking in the 1969 crisis with China, but many months of military activity elapsed first and the Kremlin finally had to raise the possibility of waging nuclear war. By going to such extremes to purchase a secure border with China in the short term, a dynamic extremely prejudicial to Soviet security and global interests in the long term was set in motion.

Cautious and subtle coercive Soviet diplomacy in response to situations of U.S.-involved conflict on the Korean Peninsula and in the Vietnam War were more fruitful. In these affairs, U.S. behavior did conform to the objectives of Soviet political-military activities. In each of these actions the use of Soviet armed forces was extremely prudent and had very limited goals, however. The Kremlin's care to delimit sharply its objectives and use of force to coerce the United States during conflicts in Northeast and Southeast Asia, if successful in meeting restricted goals, was received poorly by fraternal communist nations threatened by the United States and whose allegiance Moscow was concerned to retain.

Failures were not unknown in the third world and the USSR did not obtain, as a result of coercive diplomacy on behalf of allies there, positions of standing able to withstand serious differences of interest. And too, the ramifications of incidents to which the United States, China and European NATO nations were attentive included serious debits. Nevertheless, outcomes related to Soviet operational objectives in the third world were by and large positive in the short term and were retained over the next several years. Soviet military units served particularly well in coercing antagonists of third world allies of the USSR.

Invariably the USSR used military power with great deliberation, and particular circumspection was exhibited when the United States was an actor. In the third world, where essential Soviet security interests were not at risk, as compared with crises in Europe and along the Sino-Soviet border, Soviet military units were orchestrated prudently and in some instances with great subtlety, illustrating considerable understanding of local sensibilities.

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MAILED FIST, VELVET GLOVE:  
SOVIET ARMED FORCES AS A POLITICAL INSTRUMENT

by

Stephen S. Kaplan

The Brookings Institution

with

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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

For centuries prior to the current era Russia was a major power in Eurasia. The military collapse of Germany and Japan in the Second World War and postwar weakness of Western Europe and China left the USSR one of two great powers in the world. However, during the quarter century that followed World War II, the Soviet Union was usually considered inferior to the United States in net assessments of global military capability. In these years the United States was generally considered dominant in strategic nuclear forces and seapower, and controversy existed about Soviet and Eastern European ground and air capabilities vis-à-vis NATO. This is no longer true: The USSR has achieved strategic parity and a powerful forward deployed Soviet navy now challenges U.S. fleets. Furthermore, from the late 1960s into the mid-1970s, Soviet ground and air capabilities increased markedly relative to those of NATO while in the east, large Soviet forces were deployed along the Sino-Soviet border.

Soviet armed forces serve most importantly to deter aggression against the USSR and to defend the Soviet homeland. Military power has also been a critical instrument of Soviet foreign policy, serving as a means for expanding and preserving Soviet authority in Eastern Europe and influencing other communist regimes; responding to actions by the United States, American allies and China perceived as threatening to the security of the USSR; and obtaining favorable relations with the new nations that emerged out of former colonial empires. As the Kremlin has become

increasingly confident in recent years about the USSR's military security, the significance of Soviet armed forces as a tool of diplomacy has loomed larger. Three decades ago Soviet military diplomacy, as a function of the deployment and reach of the Red Army and its air support, extended not very far beyond the periphery of the Soviet Union. Reality today includes an impressive blue water navy, the ability to move airborne divisions and large volumes of military cargo intercontinental distances by air, and the broadsword backing of a wide range of nuclear armaments. While Soviet military power continues to be addressed heavily to Europe and Asia, the development of an ocean-going navy and a large strategic airlift capability have lengthened Moscow's reach beyond these bordering areas to distant waters and the third world.

In the past dozen years, Soviet armed forces were used to suppress political change in Czechoslovakia, present a massive military threat to China, and caution the behavior of neighbors such as Rumania and Japan. In addition, Moscow emplaced more than 20,000 military personnel in Egypt to provide that nation air defense against Israel; Soviet air force, naval and airborne units played important roles in the 1973 Middle East war; naval forces flying the Red Star were active in the 1970 Jordanian crisis and in the 1971 Indo-Pakistani war; and Soviet air and naval operations influenced the outcomes of the 1975-76 civil war in Angola and 1977-78 Ethiopian-Somalian conflict. Soviet combat aircraft also participated in civil wars in Yemen, Sudan and Iraq, and Red Star naval vessels were on the scene during the 1973 Cod War between Great Britain and Iceland, the 1974 Cyprus crisis, the 1979 China-Vietnam conflict,

and in the midst of little noticed internal crises in Somalia, Sierra Leone and other nations. While serious examination and discussion are necessary to realize the range, meaning, and implications of these interventions, we need not go further to state that the USSR has acquired a large military projection capability and has used it on a sizable number of occasions in its pursuit of foreign policy objectives globally.

There is nothing extraordinary about the Kremlin using armed forces to attain political objectives abroad. United States policymakers have turned to the military as an instrument of coercive or cooperative diplomacy on more than 200 occasions since the Second World War. These actions ranged from sending a single ship to visit a foreign port as a symbol of American support of a nation, to the crisis deployment of major ground, air, and naval units and the alert of strategic nuclear forces. 1/ Recent examples of U.S. political-military operations in 1978-79 included the heavily publicized 1978 TEAM SPIRIT exercise in South Korea (called the largest since the Korean War) to reaffirm U.S. security commitments to South Korea and Japan; the alert of airborne troops and transport by U.S. C-141 aircraft of soldiers from Morocco, Senegal and Gabon to Zaire to insure that nation's territorial integrity against insurgents operating out of Angola; the low-keyed but very special visit by the U.S. frigate Vreeland to Somalia after the Ethiopian-Somalian conflict had cooled down; and the dispatch of a squadron of F-15

visit by the U.S. frigate Vreeland to Somalia after the Ethiopian-Somalian conflict had cooled down; and the dispatch of a squadron of F-15 aircraft and then two AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control System) planes and a naval task group led by the aircraft carrier Constellation to reassure Saudi Arabia after the Shah was deposed in Iran and Soviet-supported South Yemen undertook an incursion into North Yemen. 2/

Nor has political-military diplomacy been the exclusive domain of the superpowers. During the Ethiopian-Somalian conflict, in addition to the USSR's provision of military advisers and airlift of large volumes of military materiel to Addis Ababa, many thousands of Cuban fighting men and advisers also supported Ethiopia's war effort, as did a number of Israeli military personnel. Egyptian military aircraft were reported carrying armaments to Somalia, which may have received further military aid from Saudi Arabia, Iran and perhaps even China. Meanwhile, alongside Soviet and U.S. naval vessels near the northeast African coast steamed British and French warships. 3/

Elsewhere in Africa, and besides the continuing presence of Cuban regiments in Angola and Ethiopia, 4,000 French soldiers and a French aircraft carrier in the Red Sea stood guard over Djibouti's newly gained independence; 2,500 French troops and a squadron of Jaguar aircraft were helping Chad check an insurgency, as reportedly were Egyptian troops; French fighter aircraft were intervening against the Algerian and Soviet-backed Polisario rebels seeking control over the former Spanish Sahara claimed by Morocco and Mauritania; in 1977-78 French transport aircraft brought Moroccan and then French battalions to Zaïre to repel insurgents in Shaba Province; and in 1979

Libyan air force transports reportedly ferried troops and cargo into Uganda in support of President Idi Amin against intervention sponsored by Tanzania. 4/

Africa was not the only stage for these affairs. For example, in 1977 Britain deployed troops to Belize to insure its territorial integrity, and to Bermuda to help check racial unrest. In 1978 a host of nations deployed military units to Lebanon in addition to the Syrian army and regular presence overhead of Israeli fighter planes; Venezuela emplaced aircraft in Costa Rica as a warning to the Somoza regime against Nicaraguan military intervention; and China, Vietnam and Cambodia directed an assortment of military signals at each other in Southeast Asia. 5/

The use of armed forces for purposes other than war is, of course, not a post-World War II phenomenon. Great nations and nations not so great have engaged in political-military diplomacy through the ages; so Xerxes spared the spies in Greece in order that they might report the awesome power marshalled by the Persians, the Athenians sought to coerce the Melians, and the gods of the Aegeans and other ancient peoples, we are told, demonstrated their powers mightily on their behalf and, at times, against them. 6/

Like other nations, the USSR has conducted its foreign affairs through a broad range of means. Security alliances, treaties of friendship and cooperation, and other international agreements have been entered into. Advantage has been taken of the Soviet Union's historic role in the international communist movement and permanent United Nations Security Council seat. Trade arrangements and economic aid have been carefully contoured; the Soviet media and scientific, technical, cultural and athletic

missions have been orchestrated; and covert activities and personal diplomacy have been practiced regularly. As a consummate totalitarian state, the USSR, more than most other nations, has exercised these various instruments on a tight rein. "Military force" has been viewed, "not as an independent factor but rather as a component of a complicated system of interaction among various factors--economic, political, diplomatic, ideological, cultural, moral-psychological, etc." 7/ However, in consequence of the loss in the USSR's revolutionary fervor, the weaknesses of the Soviet economy, and the essential unattractiveness of Soviet life (its intellectual banality, the continued shortages and poor quality of goods and services, and omnipresence of authority) the Soviet Union, as compared with other major powers, has been especially reliant upon its armed forces as a means of influence in international affairs.

#### Soviet Armed Forces and International Relations

This study focuses on the use of Soviet armed forces as a discrete foreign policy instrument--that is, on Soviet military operations meant to achieve specific objectives abroad at particular times. Before pursuing this relatively limited perspective, it is important to realize the broader, multidimensional role of armed forces in the conduct of Soviet foreign policy and their global significance to international relations. Military resources influence the achievement of a nation's objectives abroad not only at particular moments in time, but on an ongoing everyday basis. The general characteristics and continuing deployments of armed forces are at least as important to the maintenance of national security and success in foreign



policy as those discrete political-military operations carried on from time to time. The overall military disposition of a nation is, moreover, an important determinant of outcomes at those junctures when military units are used in non-routine ways.

"Politics is the reason, and war is only the tool," Lenin wrote commenting on Clausewitz's widely accepted view of war being "nothing but a continuation of politics by other means." 8/ Armed forces serve political ends in peacetime on a continuing basis, diffusely as they affect decisions derived from international power equations, and specifically where they give confidence to friends facing unyielding pressures and deter hostile activity by antagonists. The military can also display a nation's technology to the interest of its economic wares, acquire useful relationships by training foreign armed forces, serve as a symbol of friendship and trust via warship visits to foreign ports, and so forth. Moreover, and notwithstanding the conscious use of the military, a nation's foreign relations cannot but be affected by the size and character of its armed forces, their normal deployment and operations, their reputation in combat, and their past usage.

The significance of Soviet armed forces to the environment of international relations and the perspective within the USSR of the dynamic taking place in recent years has been expressed by a prominent Soviet defense intellectual as follows:

The Soviet Union and other socialist countries, by virtue of their increasing military potential, are changing the balance of forces in the international arena in favor of the forces of peace and socialism. This is exerting a very sobering effect on extremist circles in the imperialist states and it is creating favorable conditions for achieving the Soviet foreign-political goals in the international arena. 9/

### The Foundation: Strategic Nuclear Forces

First and foremost, the USSR is recognized globally as a great nuclear power, equaled only by the United States in ability to wreak destruction upon the planet. The Soviet nuclear arsenal, which affords the USSR the status of "superpower," is the principal foundation of the USSR's international position and the base upon which its foreign relations are conducted. Lacking these armaments, Moscow's ability to meaningfully orchestrate conventional armed forces would be wholly insecure and its diplomacy would not be greeted so seriously. Looking at some indices of the strategic balance, the ratios of USSR to U.S. forces in 1978 were 1.2:1 for delivery vehicles (total numbers of ICBMs, SLBMs and heavy bombers), 0.4:1 as concerned force loadings (total numbers of missile warheads and bombs), and 1.2:1 with regard to nuclear throw-weight (2.2:1 counting only missile warhead explosives). 10/

Evaluating the strategic nuclear balance in his 1978 report on the military posture of the United States, Secretary of Defense Harold Brown's judgment was that "a rough strategic nuclear equilibrium exists between the two superpowers at the present time. Neither country enjoys a military advantage; neither is in a position to exploit its nuclear capabilities for political ends. The situation is one of standoff or stalemate. Mutual strategic deterrence and essential equivalence are in effect." 11/

As a consequence of this rough strategic parity, which the USSR built up to slowly, the United States' preparedness to use nuclear weapons against the Soviet Union in retaliation for Soviet aggression against American allies was doubted by many; U.S. policymakers appeared to become more fearful of

provoking conventional military confrontations with Moscow; and the United States came to accept a Soviet role in international affairs globally. American allies were made more doubtful about what they could expect from the United States in crises, Soviet allies were made more confident, and all nations were given reason to accord Soviet positions increased respect.

But while the USSR has closed the gap in strategic forces with the United States only during the past decade, it should not be forgotten that the Soviet Union has presented itself to the world as a nuclear power and derived political advantage from this stature throughout most of the post-World War II era. The USSR carried out its first atomic weapon test in 1949 and detonated a thermonuclear device in 1953. Although bomber aircraft able to make round-trip flights to the United States (the MYA-4 Bison and TU-20 Bear) became available only in 1956-57, medium-range Soviet aircraft, able to make one-way journeys to North America as well as round-trip flights to Europe and Japan, were deployed beginning in 1948. 12/ The threat of nuclear war directed at U.S. allies in Eurasia was further reinforced by the deployment of MRBMs in the USSR beginning in 1955. 13/

Moscow's termination of the U.S. nuclear monopoly and then nuclear threat to Western Europe occasioned or reinforced a series of defense decisions by the West in the early and mid-1950s having major foreign policy and other political implications. 14/ Already at this time, when the United States still retained a large lead over the USSR in strategic capability, anxiety developed that "the two nuclear forces would now deter each other and cancel each other out - while Soviet ground forces were free to roll westward." 15/ Western concern was further raised by analyses suggesting, "on the basis of existing production rates and expected expansion of industrial capacity," a

two-to-one Soviet advantage over the United States in long-range bombers by the end of the 1950s. 16/

The launch of Sputnik I in October 1957, succeeding Soviet space shots, and Moscow's claims about the progress of its ICBM program were in the end overplayed by Nikita Khrushchev, but in the interim--between 1957 and the Cuban missile crisis--Soviet diplomacy benefited mightily from the improved image of USSR military power brought about by these achievements and accompanying Soviet rhetoric. With the United States widely perceived to be five years behind the USSR in space and missile technology, the Soviet Union seemed to many to have gained the upper hand in the cold war. Western Europeans saw the USSR gaining great military advantage over the United States and Americans worried about the "missile gap." 17/ While morale in the West sagged, Soviet allies and friends in the third world had their confidence buoyed. Western governments, although less pessimistic than their citizens, became less confident. Horelick and Rush have written about the U.S. reaction as follows:

Being uncertain about the strategic nuclear balance, the West found it difficult to assess the aims of particular Soviet moves. Whereas the Soviet leaders could plan their initial moves with confidence that they ran no risk of provoking war, the United States leaders were uncertain as to the risks involved in various alternative countermoves and therefore felt constrained to respond cautiously. This caution, in turn, strengthened Soviet reliance on American restraint in the cold war and increased the USSR's confidence that it could control the risk of war stemming from its actions. 18/

At least partly in reaction to the exposure of the missile gap, Soviet nuclear advances were then underestimated in the mid- and late-1960s. 19/ The perception of USSR-U.S. strategic parity in the 1970s developed, it would seem, principally as a result of the USSR's continuing deployment of

ICBMs and missile-carrying submarines after the United States set limits upon the size of its strategic forces. Whereas 44 percent of those interviewed in a poll in Britain in early 1963 believed the USSR to be at least "equal" to the United States in "strength in nuclear weapons," 40 percent saw this to be the case in mid-1971. The respective percentages in similar polls taken at these same times were, in France, 49 percent and 36 percent, and in West Germany, 37 percent and 35 percent. By contrast, in early 1977 63 percent of those polled in Britain, 58 percent in France, and 60 percent in West Germany perceived the USSR "equal" or "ahead" of the United States in nuclear strength. This change, together with perceptions of increased Soviet conventional military power, no doubt had much to do with increased NATO concern about U.S. readiness to defend Europe. "How much trust do you feel we can have in the United States to come to our defense?" Between 1968 and 1975 the percentage of those who had a "great deal" of trust fell in polls taken in Britain from 39 percent to 22 percent, in France from 18 percent to 9 percent, and in West Germany from 22 percent to 13 percent. A large decline in confidence also took place in Japan. 20/

#### The Conventional Storehouse

It is also recognized within the USSR that "international relations have...been greatly influenced by conventional armed forces." 21/ Soviet military men entered the postwar world with a very favorable reputation. The retreat before the Wehrmacht in 1941-42 to the suburbs of Moscow and the Volga, following upon the poor performance of the Red Army in the 1939-40 Winter War in Finland, denuded Stalin's military as poorly generated,

ill-equipped, and disorganized, and stirred memories of the Russian performance in the face of Napoleon's onslaught in 1812. Unlike the French emperor's legions, however, the German army did not enter Moscow and then unravel of its own accord. It was halted in battle and then driven back to Berlin with a vengeance. Stalingrad provided a mighty land counterpart to the battles of Midway and the Coral Sea, as did Kursk and the great Russian summer offensive of 1944 to the island hopping by U.S. Marines in the Pacific War and the Allied landing at Normandy and breakout in France.

When the curtain finally fell in 1945 an incredible seven and one-half million Soviet combat fatalities had been suffered, 22/ but the Red Army had obtained an image of tenacity and resilience in homeland defense approaching legend; on the offensive, words like sledgehammer and steamroller seemed to describe its character. While the Russian soldier was viewed as expecting and giving little quarter, he was seen in the end to be led by a competent officer corps and directed by talented planners. Russia appeared unconquerable as a result not only of its size, weather, and national resistance, but owing, too, to its soldiers. Directed toward other lands, they were to be feared. This performance a third of a century ago is still remembered. The Red Army's reputation was not harmed by the August 1945 Far Eastern campaign and the suppression of the revolt in Hungary in 1956 and the 1968 intervention in Czechoslovakia.

- Of great impact upon Europe and Asia since the Second World War has been the continued large size and high quality of the Red Army and, more recently, of Soviet Frontal Aviation (tactical air forces). Prior to the

Korean War, when U.S. armed forces were drawn down to about 1.4 million in number, Moscow's demobilization left about 4-5 million Soviets in arms. 23/ In the late 1970s Soviet armed forces manpower totalled roughly 3.6 million, including 1.8 million Red Army personnel and another million in Frontal Aviation and air defense forces (PVO Strany). 24/

Whether intended or not, the Red Army has often been perceived especially powerful owing to its large number of divisional formations, of late numbering 169, as compared, for example, with the U.S. Army and Marine Corps which, though mustering 966,000 personnel, are formed around a total of only 19 divisions and a small number of brigades. 25/ This 8.9:1 ratio of USSR to U.S. divisions as compared with only a 1.9:1 ratio in manpower is explained by the smaller size of Soviet divisions, many of which are also kept at less than full strength, and a lesser emphasis on support activities. It is debatable whether the Soviet approach to divisional size is more sensible militarily; that the notion of 169 divisions has often made a particularly powerful political impression is clear, however. A second frequently used index which has tended to magnify the image of Soviet ground force power is the tank count: Soviet forces are said to have about 50,000 tanks in service while the United States is listed as having only about 12,700 tanks. 26/ Focus on the tank in power evaluations that do not seriously consider tank quality, different strategies, airpower and particularly anti-tank capabilities has further enhanced the political impact of the Red Army.

Aside from influencing Western defense spending, the salience of numerical indices like division and tank counts, which exaggerate Soviet

military power, has also led to argument that Western governments have been induced "to make important concessions to the Soviet Union, accommodating Soviet demands that would otherwise have been rejected out of hand, or...ignored." 27/ It has been argued further that "in the case of NATO, overstatement has led to strategies of desperation, particularly with respect to the threatened prompt use of nuclear weapons. The effect of overstating the strength of the Soviet Army has been not only to get a smaller NATO force but also to reduce the incentives for the NATO countries to make the NATO armies fully combat ready." 28/ But if certain ways of evaluating military power have exaggerated Soviet capabilities, we should also not lose sight of the central point: The Red Army, by any standard, is a massive and well-equipped force for war in Eurasia and has heavily influenced the attitudes and behavior of neighbors and Soviet allies in their dealings with the USSR, both consciously and non-consciously, since the Second World War.

The political shadow cast by Soviet military power in Eurasia grew especially heavy after the intervention in Czechoslovakia in August 1968 and clashes with China in early 1969. Not only were new Soviet armies permanently deployed in Eastern Europe and the Far East and the total number of Soviet divisions increased; Soviet divisions were also enlarged in size, new tanks and other armored vehicles were deployed in large numbers, and mobility was enhanced generally. This increased forward deployment, firepower and capability for rapid movement afforded Moscow a force structure more closely aligned to its military doctrine, which has emphasized high-speed offensive operations led by heavy armor and mobile artillery. 29/ Preparedness



for rapid and massive military advance into foreign lands has made the USSR's neighbors not only more anxious, but also, perhaps, more open to Soviet influence. In the absence of these military developments, which NATO did not attempt to counter until the mid-1970s, Western nations might, for example, have been more demanding in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) negotiations or not accepted the Final Act when they did; or linked these negotiations more closely to progress in talks on Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR).

Accompanying the buildup in Soviet ground forces that began in the late 1960s was a major expansion and improvement in the quality of Frontal Aviation. For many years the USSR retained large numbers of World War II vintage planes. Not until the early 1960s were Soviet tactical air forces all equipped with at least first generation jet aircraft. 30/ Nevertheless, like the Red Army, the capabilities of Soviet tactical air forces were overestimated throughout the cold war. Although Red air forces lagged in obtaining all-weather multi-purpose jet aircraft incorporating advanced avionics and firepower systems, much was said about their numbers, which were made even more impressive by comparisons including only U.S. and Soviet "deployed" combat aircraft or aircraft in Europe. 31/ And though Western analysts who looked at the quality of Soviet aircraft might have been more confident than those who did not, it was of further significance that third world nations, which began to obtain Soviet aircraft along with other armaments in the mid-1950s, were impressed by the USSR's military technology.

Ironically, just as the West began to assess Soviet airpower more meaningfully, the USSR began to deploy large numbers of versatile and more

capable aircraft, able to reach distant targets, penetrate sophisticated defenses, and deliver large amounts of ordnance, thus reinforcing the perception of Soviet forces being increasingly prepared for powerful offensive operations. 32/ Nevertheless, while the West sought to accommodate Moscow in the first half of the 1970s, the continuing buildup of Soviet ground and air forces in Europe, as well as in Asia, appeared in the latter half of the decade to lead NATO to regroup politically and strengthen its armed forces and become more stalwart in East-West relations, developments decidedly not in the USSR's interest.

If the Red Army and its supporting tactical aviation mark the Soviet Union as a great power in Eurasia, the forward deployment of a modern navy beginning in the mid-1960s and then production of a large number of long-range transport aircraft bought the USSR status as a global military power of rank with the United States. Until the mid-1960s, Soviet surface warships were restricted in deployment to coastal waters. Operating only out of bloc ports and dependent upon a posture of invincibility when at sea, Soviet submarines, which did ply the Atlantic and Pacific in number, were of little political value. The establishment of a continuous Soviet surface navy presence in the Mediterranean in 1964 and then permanent deployments in West African waters and the Indian Ocean and regular appearances in the Caribbean afforded the USSR status as a naval power able to intervene with conventional military force on the world's oceans and at shores far distant from the USSR. Moscow's widespread usage of these forces thereafter in crises both great and small transformed this perspective further.

Of no small significance has been the modernity of the Soviet navy.

Although a number of older gun cruisers and destroyers have been retained, a large proportion of those cruisers, destroyers and escort vessels that first appeared on the high seas in the latter 1960s were of new construction and missile-armed. The political value of these systems and the credibility of the Soviet navy was dramatically reinforced when a Soviet supplied Egyptian patrol boat sank an Israeli destroyer with one missile in October 1967. To this impression was added the commissioning in 1968, of the USSR's first air-capable vessel, the Moskva, which combines the characteristics of a helicopter carrier and cruiser. A half decade later the Kiev, able to accommodate V/STOL (Vertical/Short Takeoff and Landi- ) aircraft, was launched. Despite these ships having been designed for anti-submarine warfare and their lack of capability to project power ashore--unlike U.S. aircraft carriers, whose principal mission is tactical air support--they have afforded the impression of a burgeoning Soviet carrier capability and, thereby, added to the USSR's political currency in international affairs.

Not unimportant either is the relative size of the Soviet navy. Although largely related to the block obsolescence of World War II built U.S. warships that were retired from service in the late 1960s and early 1970s, it was thereafter observed by many that the Soviet inventory of major operational surface combatants was greater than that of the United States. <sup>33/</sup> Soviet navy men, for their part, have not been oblivious to the political utility of warships. Navy commander-in-chief and Admiral of the Fleet Sergei G. Gorshkov has written and spoken frequently about the "peacetime" value of navies and the Soviet navy in particular. In a major treatise published serially in 1972-73, he wrote:

The Navy possesses the capability to vividly demonstrate the economic and military might of a country beyond its borders during peacetime.

\* \* \*

The Soviet Navy is a powerful factor in the creation of favorable conditions for the building of Socialism and Communism, for the active defense of peace, and for strengthening international security. 34/

Of further importance to perspectives of Soviet military power and the USSR's ability to exercise influence in distant arenas has been the development of a long-range heavy-lift air transport capability. Into the mid-1960s the Soviet Union lacked an ability to airlift sizable amounts of personnel or equipment to any significant distance. Production of the first Soviet tactical airlift plane, the AN-8 Camp, did not begin until 1956. The more advanced AN-12 Cub, able to carry 100 troops or 20 tons of cargo and available beginning about 1959, had a range of only 1,500 miles. 35/ By contrast, the much earlier developed U.S. C-130 Hercules could carry similar loads over a range twice as great. In 1967, the Soviet air force began to take delivery on the AN-22 Cock, able to carry a load of about 88 tons a distance of 3,000 miles. 36/ Although only a small number of these aircraft were produced, as compared, for example, with the U.S. C-141 Starlifter, which began to enter the U.S. Air Force inventory in 1965, the AN-22 gave Moscow the ability to impress upon the world the image of a growing and serious strategic airlift capability.

After it was observed that the USSR was not a participant in the relief effort following the devastating earthquake in Peru in 1970, Moscow reacted to this unflattering perception by showing off its new airlift capability, transporting disaster assistance halfway around the world. 37/ A second demonstration, of a rather different sort, was mounted during the 1973 Middle

East war. In the mid-1970s Soviet airmen began to take delivery on a new long-range transport aircraft, the IL-76 Candid. This plane, although in a class with the C-141 rather than the more capable U.S. C-5 Galaxy, has been produced in large number. Soviet airlifts to Angola in 1975-76 and Ethiopia in 1977-78 further reinforced international consciousness of the USSR's ability to move troops and military equipment in volume by air intercontinentally. In summary numerical terms, the aggregate lift capacity of Soviet Military Transport Aviation more than doubled between 1965 and 1977. 38/

#### Armed Forces Activities

Aside from their character, numbers, equipment and deployment, Soviet armed forces also make themselves known and influence the environment of Soviet foreign relations by their activities. A military exercise may be used to support coercive diplomacy during a crisis and in other instances to signal foreign nations of the seriousness of a specific claim or commitment. Most military exercises, though, are carried out for more general purposes: militarily, to practice and improve the talents and techniques of soldiers, sailors and airmen for war and to learn about the strengths and weaknesses of doctrine and equipment; and, politically, to impress upon foreign observers the credibility of continuing commitments, or to gain recognition for a nation as a power to be reckoned with.

Soviet ground and air exercises in Europe and Asia regularly show off the capabilities of Soviet forces and their preparedness for conflict. The increased forward deployment of Soviet armed forces in the late 1960s and their expansion in numbers and qualitative improvements in equipment

were accompanied by increases in the size and diversity of Soviet maneuvers. The combination of field exercises in Eastern Europe, European Russia, Central Asia and the Far East, together with more specialized logistics, air defense and staff maneuvers form a continuous round of military operations which, as a demonstration of practice and seriousness, reinforce respect for the USSR and keep salient images of these armed forces as being ever ready for action and of the USSR as a great power. Thus Party Chairman Brezhnev, commenting on the DVINA exercises held in the USSR in 1970, felt the moment propitious to declare that 'at the present time no question of any importance in the world can be solved without our participation, without taking into account our economic and military might'. 39/

At the same time, Moscow has been concerned that these exercises should not alarm the West. Entwined, it would appear, with the Kremlin's interest in a European security agreement and other relations with the West, beginning about 1973 the Soviet media began to downplay Warsaw Treaty exercises in Europe. 40/ After the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe was signed in Helsinki in August 1975, military exercises were able to be used to impress the West and for confidence-building insofar as the Act called for the advance release of details about maneuvers and foreign observation. 41/ Thus, for example, an exercise codenamed BEREZINA in the Belorussian Military District of the USSR in 1978 was witnessed by U.S., West German, French, British, Belgian, Dutch and Swiss military observers. 42/ Of further significance, Soviet and WTO maneuvers have been relatively small in size as compared with those conducted annually by NATO. While the bloc stages exercises more frequently than does

NATO, they usually involve no more than about 25,000 personnel. By contrast, the NATO 1978 AUTUMN FORGE set of exercises included the participation of more than 300,000 troops. 43/ The point is not that these Western exercises may appear menacing to the USSR and its allies, but that Moscow uses this disparity to its advantage in propaganda directed at the third world about the peaceful intentions of the USSR as compared with the West.

Perhaps the most important political purposes of joint exercises as well as of other cooperative activities carried out by Soviet and Eastern European military personnel are the maintenance of a strong bond between the armed forces of the USSR and other Warsaw Treaty nations, and the image of the USSR as both all powerful in the region and committed to defending Eastern Europe against the West and particularly West Germany. 44/ In addition to imparting a common military doctrine and complete weapons standardization upon the bloc, Moscow uses joint exercises to increase the identification and respect held by Eastern European nations, and particularly their armed forces, for the USSR. The late Soviet defense minister and Politburo member Marshal A.A. Grechko, related:

Joint troop and command and staff exercises play a large role in strengthening military cooperation. By accomplishing common missions in the course of such exercises, the soldiers of fraternal armies come to know each other more closely, learn together the art of modern combat, understand better their international duty, and become imbued even more deeply with a feeling of friendship and respect, and of mutual trust and understanding. It can be said with complete justification that joint exercises are a genuine school of inviolable friendship and combat comradeship of soldiers of the fraternal armies. They demonstrate the growing defensive might of the socialist states and motivate personnel of the allied armies to defend the revolutionary achievements of the peoples. 45/

Descriptively accurate about its primary purpose, FRIENDSHIP-79 was the codename given joint Soviet-Czech army exercises held in 1979.

To offset the imperial appearance of Soviet armed forces in forward exercises, maneuvers in East Germany, for example, will typically include Polish as well as Soviet units; those in Poland, East German and Czechoslovakian troops; and so forth. After Rumania refused to allow other Warsaw Treaty armies to exercise on its soil in the 1960s, joint command and staff exercises, to which Bucharest did not object, took on a special significance; one in 1978 saw Rumanian, Bulgarian and Soviet officers in Rumania being directed by treaty commander Marshal Viktor Kulikov. 46/ A second device is for joint exercises to be directed by a home country commander. Thus exercise SHIELD-76, held in Poland in September 1976 with 35,000 Soviet, Polish, East German and Czechoslovakian military personnel participating, was directed by Polish defense minister, General W. Jaruzelski. 47/

Joint naval exercises, including East German and Polish warships, are also held to strengthen alliance bonds. Soviet navy commander-in-chief Admiral S.G. Gorshkov has commented:

The development and deepening of combat cooperation between Soviet military sailors and sailors of the allied fleets are promoted by the improved coordination of action among the naval forces at all operational levels and by the holding of joint voyages and exercises, which have become a good school of international education. 48/

After the first large-scale Soviet naval maneuvers in open waters--the Norwegian Sea--in 1961, the Soviet navy entered on a pattern of holding such exercises every other year. In the summers of 1965 and 1968 somewhat



larger maneuvers were held in the Atlantic area and as the Soviet squadron in the Mediterranean expanded, it too established a prominent exercise pattern. In 1970 and 1975 worldwide exercises were held (OKEAN '70 and '75), the latter including operations by 200 ships in the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans and adjacent seas as well as flights by long-range naval reconnaissance aircraft based in the USSR, Cuba, Guinea, South Yemen, and Somalia. 49/

Of course, expanded naval exercises, like ground maneuvers, new procurements and forward deployments, may stimulate further defense spending and create greater unity among nations hostile to or suspicious of Soviet foreign policy, rather than lead antagonists to accommodate Soviet interests and objectives. Where nations do not have the will or means, though, they risk a loss in initiative and independence in their international relations. Thus, for example, Scandinavian nations feel continued pressure as a result of large and frequent exercises by the Soviet Baltic and Northern Fleets.

A further contribution by the navy to Soviet peacetime and non-crisis diplomacy are routine port visits. Sending warships to a distant port to show off the reach of a nation's military power and the state of its technology has long been used as a means to impress foreign peoples, while the fact of the visit, the welcoming of visitors aboard ship, and organized good deeds by sailors going ashore have been used to help create or reinforce friendly bilateral relations. In addition to visiting Warsaw Pact nations, Soviet naval vessels were reported to have visited about 75 different countries between 1953 and 1974. 50/ At first the Red Star was

seen primarily in northern European and a few Mediterranean ports. Then, following the forward deployments by surface groups into the Mediterranean, the Atlantic, the Indian Ocean and West African waters in the 1960s and 1970s, visits began to be paid to nations all along the Mediterranean littoral, as well as ones in sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean, the Persian Gulf, and South Asia. In 1977 Soviet warships paid more than 600 visits to foreign ports. 51/ This presence is highly calculated as a means for diffusely supporting the foreign interests of the USSR. In Admiral Gorshkov's words:

Our warships are calling with continuing greater frequency at foreign ports, fulfilling the role of 'plenipotentiaries' of the Socialist countries.

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The friendly visits of Soviet navymen make it possible for the peoples of many countries to become convinced with their own eyes of the creativity of the ideas of Communism, and of the genuine equality of all nationalities in the Soviet state, and to gain a concept of the level of development and culture of representatives of the most varied regions of our immense Motherland. They see warships embodying the achievements of Soviet science, technology, and industry, and establish friendly contacts with representatives of the most diverse strata of population of our country. Soviet navymen, from admirals down to seamen, are bearing the truth about the first Socialist country in the world, about Communist ideology and culture, and about the Soviet way of life to the masses of peoples of other states. They are clearly and convincingly spreading the ideas of the Leninist peaceloving policy of the Communist Party and the Soviet government through many countries of the world. It is impossible to overestimate the significance of this ideological influence. 52/

In recent years Soviet military aircraft have also visited foreign nations on missions of goodwill. Aside from special appearances at other Warsaw Treaty airbases, in 1978 Soviet airmen also visited Finland and France, for example. 53/ The visit to France was paid by a squadron of

MIG-23s and was led by an air force lieutenant general. The appearance of what was probably the USSR's best fighter aircraft and presence of an officer of such rank indicate the desire by Moscow to put its best foot forward, as a show of esteem for France and to impress the French with the level of Soviet military technology. At the end of this visit Tass reported, pleased: "The French press has devoted much attention to the official visit of the Soviet air force units. The newspapers particularly note its significance for the further development of traditional ties between the two countries and peoples..." 54/ What is of further interest, this visit followed up one by French aircraft to the USSR a year earlier, thus pointing up still another way in which Soviet armed forces personnel are used to support friendly bilateral relations. 55/

In addition to occasional visits to the USSR by nonallied air force units and naval vessels--for example, the visit by two Turkish destroyers to Odessa in 1978, 56/ Soviet military men each year play host to hundreds of military and civilian guests who are invited to observe exercises or military installations, discuss subjects of mutual interest, celebrate military and other holidays, etc. Thus in 1977, for example, the commander of the Algerian navy participated in the Black Sea Fleet review on Soviet Navy Day and a U.S. Army brigadier general lectured Soviet officers at the Institute of Military History in Moscow; 57/ and in 1978-79, high-level military delegations visited the Soviet Union from countries as diverse as Cuba, Syria, Nigeria and Peru. 58/ Then, too, there are those visits abroad by Soviet military delegations. In addition to trips to "fraternal" countries such as Cuba and Vietnam, and to third world nations that purchase

armaments from the USSR like Libya and Algeria, ranking Soviet military men also may be found periodically in countries not so attached to the USSR. In 1977 first deputy defense minister, General S. L. Sokolov led a delegation to Jordan, and in 1978 Admiral Gorshkov paid a visit to Sweden, the object in both instances being, we may presume, to promote better bilateral relations. 59/

The hosting in the USSR of foreign armed forces delegations is, of course, entirely aside from the training of foreign military men at Soviet armed forces schools and other facilities. Of the training given to military men from other communist states, Marshal Grechko wrote: "While successfully mastering comprehensive ideological-theoretical, military and technical knowledge within the walls of Soviet military academies, the officers of fraternal countries are imbued with a feeling of profound respect for the heroic past of the Soviet people and its armed forces, and with a spirit of military friendship and comradeship." 60/ Such objectives also have applied, no doubt, to those students from less developed nations who have been going to the USSR for a quarter of a century. Between 1955 and 1977 41,875 military personnel from several dozen third world countries received training in the Soviet Union. 61/

Not to be forgotten either are those Soviet military assistance teams in other communist nations and the third world. Through 1977 the USSR delivered \$21.0 billion in armaments to less developed countries. The number of Soviet military personnel abroad to instruct third world military personnel in 1977, when about \$3.3 billion in arms deliveries were made, may be estimated at more than eight thousand. 62/ Of course, military advisers and special delegations sent abroad as well as training and other

hosting within the USSR, although meant to obtain goodwill and even influence, are uncertain instruments. Often, things look better from a distance; so hosts to Soviet military personnel and foreign military visitors to the USSR may sometimes find Soviet behavior and methods or the USSR as a nation less than appealing.

#### Discrete Political-Military Operations

The procurement and deployment of large strategic and conventional armed forces together with the favorable reputation of Soviet military men, the high quality of their equipment, and their routine activities are fundamental to: the role played by the USSR in world politics on an everyday basis; the continuing security interests of the USSR, particularly the deterrence of hostile behavior by the United States and by neighbors in Europe and Asia; and the attention paid Moscow when, from time to time, world order or peace are endangered abruptly and the heartbeat of international relations zigzags with excitement or uncertainty. Yet despite the USSR's powerful military posture, it has regularly utilized the military either as the principal means of, or for a helping hand in, achieving specific foreign policy objectives at particular times. These discrete political operations by Soviet armed forces units are the subject of this study.

Our interest thus lies in a middle ground, when Soviet military men were called upon to do something special, between war and the routine. This no small space has been one of great diversity, both in the contextual character of incidents and the usage of Soviet armed forces. In some

instances the Kremlin has been faced suddenly by a serious threat to a major interest and had only a brief time to respond; in others Soviet leaders became gradually aware of an opportunity. The armed forces drawn upon to meet these and the numerous other circumstances in which political-military diplomacy has been practiced and the activities of these units have been no less varied. Soviet leaders have utilized a single warship, arrayed a fleet, used naval and air forces in combination, turned to the Red Army, and so forth as circumstances have appeared to warrant and military capabilities have allowed. As to the operations themselves, new deployments have been made, units have been reinforced, special exercises and visits have been carried out, guns have been fired, foreign personnel have been transported, etc.

#### Definition of a Discrete Political-Military Operation

Notes like the above provide a feel for the subject of this examination and make obvious why some military activity is considered a discrete political-military operation and is thus of direct interest in this study, and why other behavior by Soviet armed forces units may be of no more than indirect concern. Yet there are many instances in which this might be unclear. To further clarify the basic concept under study, the following definition is offered:

A political use of the armed forces occurs when physical actions are taken by one or more components of the uniformed military services as part of a deliberate attempt by the national authorities to influence, or to be prepared to influence, specific behavior of individuals in another nation without engaging in a continuing contest of violence. 63/

Thus, a political use of Soviet armed forces was inferred if five

elements were present in a situation.

1. A physical change in the disposition (location, activity or readiness) of one or more component units of the armed forces had to occur. Mere references by Soviet leaders to the military (verbal threats or statements of support) were not enough to qualify. Military activities were taken to include: the use of firepower; the establishment, disestablishment or special extension of a permanent or temporary presence abroad; a blockade; an interposition; an exercise or demonstration; the escort or transport of another actor's armed forces or materiel; a visit by a military unit to a foreign location; a non-routine reconnaissance, patrol, or surveillance operation; or a change in readiness status. Readiness measures included changes in alert status, the mobilization of reserve forces, and the movement of units toward or away from specific locations.

2. Behind this activity there had to have appeared a consciousness of purpose. Only in those cases when a specific political impact in a foreign nation could be perceived as an objective of the national command authority--that is, a member of the Politburo--in initiating action, was a military operation considered to constitute a political use of the armed forces.

3. Soviet decisionmakers must have sought to attain their objectives at least initially by gaining influence in a target state, not by physically imposing their will. Generally speaking, armed forces may be used either as a political or as a martial instrument. When used as a martial instrument a military unit acts to seize an objective (occupy

territory) or to destroy an objective (defeat an army). In short, attainment of the immediate objective itself satisfies the purpose for which the force was used. When used as a political instrument, the objective is to influence the behavior of another actor--that is, to cause an actor to do something that he would not otherwise do, or not to do something that he would do otherwise. Thus, the activity of the military units themselves does not attain the objective; goals are achieved through the effect of the force on the perceptions of the actor.

4. Soviet leaders must have sought to avoid a sustained contest of violence or war. Although a war may result from a use of the armed forces which otherwise meets the terms of the definition, the initiation of war must not have been the intent of the action.

5. Some specific behavior had to have been desired of a foreign actor. A use of Soviet armed forces had to have been directed at influencing particular behavior in a discrete situation, or at least to have occurred because of concern with specific behavior.

#### Behavior Outside of the Definition

The concept of a political use of Soviet armed forces utilized in this study may be further clarified by pointing out excluded classes of military activity.

1. Direct defense of the realm. Actions by Soviet armed forces units to definitively terminate a foreign threat to the USSR or a Soviet position abroad were not considered political-military operations. On a sizable number of occasions since the Second World War Soviet fighter aircraft have fired at or near foreign aircraft claimed to be flying in the airspace



of the USSR or one of its allies. Some of these aircraft were shot down or were otherwise made to land; some simply disappeared; others were fortunate enough to be able to reach a hospitable destination. In most of these instances the Soviet action did not appear related to any specific foreign policy goal, but rather seemed meant as a military termination of the intrusion. Aside from the rigorous protection of sovereignty, the most Soviet leaders seemed to have had in mind--to the extent actions did not appear directed by local command--was to demonstrate the effectiveness of the USSR's defenses and to deter similar approaches by foreign aircraft in the future. 64/ Likewise excluded from this examination are the large number of seizures by Soviet patrol vessels of foreign--usually Japanese--fishing vessels operating in or said to be overfishing Soviet claimed or protected waters.

There is also an exit side to this class of affairs. In the absence of any particular political context, Soviet troops in Eastern Europe--particularly East Germany, Berlin, and Austria before the end of the occupation there--have enforced rigorous transit checks upon travelers going abroad, and shot and arrested would-be escapees to the West. In one instance in 1949, Russian troops went so far as to escort a Hungarian soccer team in Vienna; in another, 20 years later to the day, Soviet MIGs attempted to prevent an aircraft hijacked by two East German youths from landing at Tegel airport in West Berlin. 65/ In the late 1940s and early 1950s small numbers of troops were also utilized to arrest regime opponents in Eastern Europe and to conduct break-ins and kidnappings in West Berlin. In virtually all of these incidents the Soviet objective lay in the action

itself and, otherwise, only in deferring individuals generally in occupied lands from acting similarly.

2. The continued presence of forward deployed forces; nondiscriminating political deployments; and operational deployments. The establishment, disestablishment or change in the quality of a military presence aimed at a specific set of circumstances is, of course, viewed as a political use of the military under the terms of the definition. The psychological reinforcement provided by the ongoing presence of Soviet units in a foreign nation or distant sea is not considered as an incident, however. Although Soviet garrisons in Eastern Europe and the continuing display of the flag by the Fifth Eskadra in the Mediterranean, for example, may be of great importance to Soviet foreign policy, these steady-state deployments do not constitute discrete political-military operations. Not counted either as an incident is the establishment of a permanent deployment seemingly aimed at a region generally and not calculated to influence behavior narrowly defined or related to an immediate set of circumstances. Thus while the creation of the West African Patrol in 1970 in response to a Portuguese attack on Guinea is considered as a discrete political-military operation, the establishment of a Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean beginning in 1968 is not.

Falling further beyond the bounds of the definition are deployments of newly developed weapons and force changes that seemed to have as their primary purpose strategic nuclear deterrence or the improvement of war-fighting capabilities—for example, the siting of land-based ICBMs, the launching of ballistic missile submarines, the deployment of surface combatants in the North Atlantic, and the modernization of ground forces in

Europe. A distinction is also made between the emplacement of forces abroad to support a foreign nation and the acquisition of a military base to improve the operational effectiveness of Soviet armed forces. Whereas, for example, the Soviet air defense of Egypt in the early 1970s is considered an incident, the use of a Cuban airfield by Soviet long-range naval reconnaissance aircraft, enhancing Soviet surveillance of the Atlantic Ocean, is not so regarded.

3. Routine Military Activities. Most military exercises, visits and surveillance operations form part of a normal pattern of activity to maintain or improve combat abilities and are not conducted to achieve measured political objectives at definite times. While the political purposes they may serve are diffuse, they are sufficiently explained by continuing military concerns—to be better prepared for conflict, to obtain information about antagonists, and for naval vessels to take on supplies and obtain shore leave for personnel. Following this line, we also do not consider as a political use of the armed forces Soviet monitoring and harassment of Western naval operations on the high seas; airborne, seaborne, and satellite intelligence-gathering activities; overflights of foreign territory for the apparent purpose of testing readiness and defenses; or approaches to foreign military and civilian aircraft in international airspace.

4. Goodwill Diplomacy. In addition to excluding "business" visits by Soviet warships to foreign ports that are carried out as a cost-effective means of maintaining forward deployments, we further do not consider most of those appearances the Soviets term "friendly unofficial" or "official

goodwill" visits. 66/ While purposes of logistic support and crew rest also may be served by these latter-termed visits, these are carried out primarily as an expression of friendship to the host nation and are meant to facilitate Soviet diplomacy and bilateral relations. They fall outside the definition, however, insofar as their purpose is general and not geared toward influencing particular foreign behavior or a precise situation abroad.

Also of this sort are disaster relief operations by Soviet military men, who have assisted in the wake of natural calamities in Eastern Europe and who flew aid to Peru after the 1970 earthquake there. Humanitarian interests aside, these actions to relieve suffering may be carried out with a political result in mind; namely, the establishment or reinforcement of friendship and of a positive image of the USSR. Still, they are not meant to achieve particular foreign policy goals. 67/ The same may be said about most arms transfer agreements and the sending abroad of military training teams, staff advisers, skilled technical personnel and construction directors, the practice of which may be dated back to Lenin's day when military assistance was given to Ataturk and the Kuomintang, as well as to Iran, Turkey and the German Reichswehr. 68/ Although these actions may be important to the success of Soviet foreign policy and are clearly meant to support diplomacy, they are usually not aimed at achieving specific objectives in time. More fundamentally, though, an arms transfer is not an operation carried out by armed forces units; nor in the sense of interest here are those military assistance activities of Soviet military personnel—our focus being on actions by Soviet operational combat and combat support units. Hence we do not consider for the purpose of this study any Soviet arms sales or military assistance activities.

5. Non-military Operations. To further assure clarity, it is, perhaps, also useful to relate that our interest lies only in actions by uniformed military units. Excluded on this ground are covert activities in foreign nations, the transport of armaments and foreign military personnel by civil aircraft and merchant vessels, and violent actions by Soviet civilians abroad--for example, the illegal landing in 1956 by 30 Soviet herring fishermen in the Shetland Islands in search of one of their number seeking political asylum in Great Britain. 69/

6. Statements about Soviet Military Power. Kremlin leaders and the Soviet media often make reference to Soviet military power in statements of warning to antagonists and support for friends. Nikita Khrushchev was a practitioner of "rocket rattling," as it was called during the cold war. Although Soviet statements about the USSR's military power generally have not been as strident during the Brezhnev era--as much the result, perhaps, of the USSR's real increase in military capabilities as of a consciously changed style of diplomacy--references to Soviet armed forces continue to be made by Moscow routinely as well as in crises. 70/ We, of course, are interested in the coupling of a verbal or written statement about Soviet military power with a discrete military operation aimed at achieving specific foreign policy objectives. A statement alone, though, is not considered a discrete political-military operation. To qualify as an incident, an element of the armed forces of the USSR must have been alerted or redeployed, or have performed some special activity aimed at attaining a political goal.

#### Caveats and Sources

Notwithstanding the exclusion by definition of these other forms of Soviet behavior as discrete political-military operations and thus as

incidents of direct interest in this study, virtually all of these types of activity are taken up to some extent as necessary background or as actions related to instances when Soviet armed forces units were used as a discrete political instrument. On a number of occasions, moreover, a form of activity normally excluded was taken to constitute an incident--for example, when Soviet military units visited foreign nations, attacked Western aircraft, imposed special transit controls or seized Japanese fishermen as part of a particular foreign policy campaign aimed at achieving specific goals abroad.

Also included as incidents are several instances when Soviet naval ships were used to clear blocked waterways in third world countries in the wake of a major military conflict. Moscow seemed to have relatively specific foreign policy objectives and international politics appeared very much at play in these situations, as compared, for example, with relief operations following natural disasters. At quite the other end of the spectrum, we also consider as incidents the suppression of dissidence in East Germany in 1953 and in Hungary in 1956. Although the USSR, in the end, did impose its will by physical force, it did not enter into a war or sustained contest of violence with foreign armed forces in these incidents. The Kremlin probably also was hopeful that the initial appearance of Red Army formations or relatively small doses of violence would suffice and, later, saw the use of firepower as a caution to areas of East Germany and Hungary not in revolt. Unable thus to discount a Soviet concern to use the military to "influence" behavior in these two instances, we include them and consider the use of force in these incidents representative of the limit

able to be tolerated by our definition of a political use of the military.

Readers will recognize that while the above definition and elaboration are necessary to the isolation of that colony of events sharing features of critical interest, considerable care and attention to detail were necessary for navigating this course. In several instances there was no escaping a need to make close judgment calls about whether a certain activity did or did not qualify as an incident. And like the sound offered by different but competent musicians playing from the same score, interpretations of complicated notes may vary. The argument, however, is that those who would take the time and repeat this research effort would arrive at a list extremely similar, although not necessarily identical, to the list of incidents presented in Appendix A. 71/

A wide variety of sources were utilized to determine the occurrence of incidents. The materials inspected included studies of Soviet foreign relations and crisis behavior, histories of Soviet military actions, regional and national political histories, surveys and chronologies of international events, memoirs by political and military leaders, and unclassified and declassified U.S. government records. No classified records of any sort were examined. Appendix B presents the complete bibliography of materials considered as potential sources of incidents or of supportive data. It is difficult to know whether or not Soviet political uses of the military other than those that were determined to have occurred have gone unrecorded, are recorded only in classified documents, or did not appear in the materials examined. The amount of effort expended in the incident search and the variety and number of sources examined may give readers confidence

that a very large portion of those incidents recorded in unclassified materials have been identified. 72/

In instances of uncertainty about the accuracy or veracity of essential data—for example, an otherwise unsupported newspaper story written while an incident was purportedly breaking—scholars and other analysts thought to be acquainted with the event in question were contacted for advice. On the basis of this support a number of events were either validated as incidents, or judged to have been less than real or as falling outside of definitional bounds. Hence we did not include as incidents, for example, reports about Soviet submarines carrying arms to Hukbalahap insurgents in the Philippines early in the cold war, participation by Soviet combat pilots in fighting between North and South Yemen in 1972, a series of ICBM tests across Soviet Asia just prior to a visit by Secretary of State Kissinger to China in 1973, or Soviet electronic warfare being directed by Soviet warships in the Mediterranean against Egypt during the brief conflict between Libya and Egypt in 1977. 73/ Bits and pieces of data related to incidents were also subjected to outside scrutiny.

If some incidents have been missed, these were most likely very small military operations which, although meant to be especially meaningful, were mistakenly perceived as routine or normal actions having no specific foreign policy objective. That the USSR used armed forces in a crisis or a crisis occurred in which Soviet military units played a role and that that information has gone unreported seems less likely. Also missed, perhaps, were a few incidents in which the sole Soviet military activity was military air transport and the numbers of aircraft and flights made were very small. A very brief



deployment abroad of a very small number of ground troops or airmen may, too, have gone undetected, notwithstanding our search effort and identification of a number of these types of cases.

Nor in many instances could we be completely confident about the accuracy of information providing specific numbers of Soviet naval, troop and aircraft units. Often the data available were estimates based on partial observations and calculation rather than hard and complete numerical counts. Some reports were contradictory and a sizable proportion contained some degree of difference. In still other instances data were puzzling or implausible. Detective work, advice from others and the exercise of judgment were thus requisite here, too. To further increase confidence, and serving the purpose of aggregate analysis as well, the analysis of Soviet armed forces usage data is done largely in terms of categories—for example, incidents involving no more than one air regiment versus ones in which more than one air regiment were utilized; actions including the participation of no more than one battalion, more than one battalion but no more than one division, or more than one division; and so forth.

On the basis of our definition, guidelines, and search of materials, 187 incidents were identified in which Soviet armed forces units were used as a discrete foreign policy instrument between June 1944 and June 1979. The Second World War ended in Europe in May 1945 and officially in the Pacific theater four months later. By the latter date the Red Army occupied in whole or in part a dozen countries and Stalin had used this presence to lever political developments in these nations and to obtain territorial and

economic concessions from them. It also seems clear that these objectives were in mind before Soviet troops set foot outside the USSR and became of prime importance to Moscow in bilateral relations as soon as foreign areas were cleared of Axis military forces. Because it is extremely difficult to determine when Soviet forces in a country began to turn from the task of fighting to the role of political guarantor, we use as the beginning dates of these incidents the month and year in which Red Army troops first entered a foreign country. Using this guideline, Soviet political-military diplomacy since the end of the Second World War may be said to have been practiced first in Eastern Europe in the summer of 1944. June 1944 marks the entry of the Red Army into parts of pre-war Poland and Finland that were soon to become sovereign USSR territory. June 1979 represents an arbitrary cutoff date necessarily imposed upon the research effort.

#### Goals and Paths of the Analysis

The goals of this study are: to determine the historical record of the use of Soviet armed forces as a political instrument since the Second World War—that is, to identify and describe the political context of incidents and related Soviet armed forces usage; to gain an understanding of the USSR's readiness to use military power in the pursuit of foreign policy objectives and willingness to accept risks in doing so; to reach conclusions about the short- and longer-term utility of political-military operations to Soviet interests and foreign policy goals; and to realize the implications of this Soviet behavior for U.S. interests and American foreign and defense policies.

Chapter two, which presents an aggregate analysis of the 187 incidents identified within the period examined, provides a summary overview of constancy and change in the circumstances drawing discrete Soviet political-military operations, the types of armed forces used by Moscow, and the activities of those units. Chapters three through five, which also look back in time at the use of Soviet armed forces as a foreign policy instrument before World War II, elaborate on this analysis and discuss the significance of discrete coercive operations with reference to Soviet expansionary behavior and the defense of communist regimes, the security of the USSR, and influence in the third world. These chapters also discuss the pertinence of Soviet historical memories, political change within the USSR, the structure of international relations, developments in Soviet military capabilities, the significance of prior Kremlin commitments and related rhetoric, and Soviet thinking about the political use of the military.

Part two presents eight sets of case studies done by specialists, to obtain a micro-understanding of the phenomenon under examination and an in-depth foundation for reaching conclusions about, first, the utility of discrete political-military operations to Soviet interests and foreign policy objectives, and second, the implications of this diplomacy for U.S. interests and behavior abroad. Each analyst was asked to carry out in-depth examinations of two or more incidents and to compare them with reference to a single set of questions focusing on: (1) the concerns and objectives of Soviet policymakers; (2) their usage of armed forces units and other forms of diplomacy; (3) the concerns and objectives of the foreign targets of this

Soviet diplomacy; (4) the role of third parties; (5) outcomes of incidents and their relationship to the USSR's use of armed forces; (6) implications for Soviet and U.S. interests and foreign and defense policies.

The key interest in the process of selecting sets of incidents for examination was to obtain diversity in situational context and structure and in Soviet armed forces usage. Those characteristics of special concern and the exemplary incidents chosen included the presentation of direct threats to the security of the USSR (the Sino-Soviet border conflict) and Soviet authority in Eastern Europe (crises in Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia); situations in which major U.S. armed forces elements were turned to (the Korean and Vietnam wars; the Pueblo, EC-121 and 1976 crises on the Korean Peninsula; and the 1967 and 1973 wars in the Middle East); third world situations in which U.S. armed forces did not play a role (the Egyptian-Israeli conflict in 1969-70, and insurgencies in Sudan and Iraq in the early 1970s; the Angolan civil war and Ethiopian-Somalian conflict; and two West African crises in the late 1960s and early 1970s). These different sets also display diversity in regional setting, level of initial local violence, and the types of Soviet armed forces utilized and their activities. Another concern was to focus on incidents in the post-Khrushchev era. Exceptions were made for the Korean War and the 1956 revolts in Hungary and Poland to allow pairings with later events of great interest--the Vietnam War and the 1968 intervention in Czechoslovakia, respectively. An understanding of the USSR's use of force in these earlier incidents is also relevant to continuing concerns about similar types of crises that might occur again in those same places. 74/

While each different set of cases was selected with an eye toward diversity, the individual cases that were joined to comprise each set were chosen from the perspective of obtaining comparability, to the extent possible, in circumstances of important interest, regional location, the usage of Soviet armed forces, and so forth. Hence conclusions are drawn at the end of each of these chapters on the basis of two or more experiences sharing significant commonality.

Part three performs three functions: First, drawing upon the experiences examined in part two, and supplemented by other incidents discussed earlier in the study, an overall evaluation is presented of the effectiveness of Soviet political-military operations--that is, their utility to the satisfaction of Soviet foreign policy objectives. Considered thereafter are the implications of this evaluation for U.S. interests and foreign and defense policies. Addressed finally is the subject of circumstances which might lead the USSR to use armed forces as a political instrument in the future.

Footnotes

1. See Barry M. Blechman and Stephen S. Kaplan, Force Without War: U.S. Armed Forces as a Political Instrument (Brookings Institution, 1978); and associated unpublished manual by Stephen S. Kaplan (Brookings Institution, 1977), pp. 12-23.

2. For stories about these actions, see on TEAM SPIRIT '78, the Los Angeles Times, March 7, 1978 and the Baltimore Sun, March 18-19, 1978; on the Ugandan scare, the Washington Star, February 26, 1977; on the Zaire events, the Washington Post, May 18 and June 7, 1978; on the visit to Somalia, Foreign Broadcast Information Service (hereafter, FBIS), Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (September 1, 1978), p. B2; and on the deployment to Saudi Arabia, the New York Times, January 11 and March 7, 1979, the Financial Times (London), January 12, 1979, and the Washington Post, March 9, 1979.

3. Washington Star, April 5, 1978; Washington Post, February 7, 1978; Moscow Tass and Radio, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (February 17, 1978), pp. H1-2, and vol. 3 (December 19, 1977), p. C2.

4. Washington Post, May 9, 1978; New York Times, May 12, 1978 and March 21, 1979; Moscow Tass in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol 3 (February 17, 1978), p. F7; L'Express (Paris), no. 1418 (September 11-17, 1978), p. 49; Washington Star, March 5, 1979.

5. New York Times, July 7 and 9, and December 5, 1977; Washington Post, September 18, 1978; New York Times and Baltimore Sun, July 12, 1978.

6. Regarding the first two examples, see Herodotus, The Persian Wars, trans. George Rawlinson (The Modern Library, 1942), pp. 553-54; Thucydides, The Peloponnesian War, trans. John H. Finney, Jr. (The Modern Library, 1951), pp. 330-37.

7. V.M. Kulish, Military Force and International Relations, no. 58947 (Joint Publications Research Service, May 8, 1973), p. 167.

8. The quotes are taken from V.D. Sokolovskiy, Soviet Military Strategy 3d ed. (Crane, Russak and Company, 1975), p. 14; Karl Von Clausewitz, On War, trans. O.J. Mattijs (Combat Forces Press, 1953), p. 596.

9. Kulish, Military Force and International Relations, p. 170.

10. Charles A. Sorrels and others, "Defense Policy," in Joseph A. Pechman, ed., Setting National Priorities: The 1979 Budget (Brookings Institution, 1978), p. 269. Soviet strategic forces in 1978 included 90 submarines able to launch 1,015 missiles, about 1,400 ICBMs (intercontinental ballistic missiles), 690 IREMs and MRBMs (intermediate and medium-range ballistic missiles), and 756 long-range and medium-range bombers. International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance 1978-1979 (IISS, 1978), p. 8.

11. Secretary of Defense Harold Brown, Department of Defense Annual Report: Fiscal Year 1979 (Department of Defense, February 2, 1978, p. 4.

12. Robert P. Berman, Soviet Air Power in Transition (Brookings Institution, 1977), pp. 26-27.

13. Edward L. Warner III, "Soviet Strategic Force Posture: Some Alternative Explanations," in Warner and others, Comparative Defense Policy (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), p. 313; Thomas W. Wolfe, Soviet Power and Europe, 1945-1970 (The Johns Hopkins Press, 1970), p. 183.

14. George H. Quester, Nuclear Diplomacy: The First Twenty-Five Years (Dunellen, 1970), pp. 59-87.

15. Ibid., p. 62.

16. The quote is from Allen Dulles, The Craft of Intelligence (Signet, 1965), p. 151; Quester, Nuclear Diplomacy, pp. 126-29; Jerome H. Kahan, Security in the Nuclear Age: Developing U.S. Strategic Arms Policy (Brookings Institution, 1975), pp. 30-31.

17. Wolfe, Soviet Power and Europe, pp. 84-89; Arnold L. Horelick and Myron Rush, Strategic Power and Soviet Foreign Policy (University of Chicago Press, 1966), pp. 63-64; Leo P. Crespi, "Trend Measurement of U.S. Standing in Foreign Public Opinion," unpublished paper done under auspices of United States Information Agency (1978?); Robert B. Mahoney, Jr., "The Superpower Balance, Military Policy and Public Opinion in the United Kingdom, France, and the Federal Republic of Germany," in Donald C. Daniel, ed., Perceptions of the Superpower Military Balances: Considerations and Evidence, report no. 56-78-001 (Naval Postgraduate School, 1978), pp. 163-64.

18. Horelick and Rush, Strategic Power and Soviet Foreign Policy, p. 110.



19. Albert Wohlstetter, "Racing Forward or Ambling Back," in James R. Schlesinger and others, Defending America: Toward a New Role in the Post-Detente World (Basic Books, 1977), pp. 128-35.

20. Poll data is from Crespi, "Trend Measurement," tables 15 and 26. On the verbal Soviet message to Western European governments in the early 1970s, see John Newhouse, Cold Dawn: The Story of SALT (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973), pp. 57-58.

21. Kulish, Military Force and International Relations. p. 172.

22. J. David Singer and Melvin Small, The Wages of War, 1816-1965: A Statistical Handbook (Wiley, 1972), p. 67.

23. Wolfe, Soviet Power and Europe, pp. 10-11.

24. The Military Balance 1978-1979, pp. 8-10.

25. Ibid., pp. 5-10.

26. Ibid., pp. 6, 9.

27. Edward N. Luttwak, "The Missing Dimension of U.S. Defense Policy: Force Perceptions and Power," in Daniel, Perceptions of the Superpower Military Balances, p. 38. Also see R.J. Vincent, "Military Power and Political Influence: The Soviet Union and Western Europe," Adelphi Papers, no. 119 (IISS, Autumn, 1975).

28. Alain C. Enthoven and K. Wayne Smith, How Much is Enough?: Shaping the Defense Program, 1961-1969 (Harper and Row, 1971), p. 161.

29. Jeffrey Record, Sizing up the Soviet Army (Brookings Institution, 1975), pp. 12-16; Barry M. Blechman and others, The Soviet Military Buildup and U.S. Defense Spending (Brookings Institution, 1977), pp. 9-10.

30. Berman, Soviet Air Power in Transition, p. 29.
31. Enthoven and Smith, How Much is Enough?, pp. 142-47.
32. On these Soviet aircraft developments, see Berman, Soviet Air Power in Transition, pp. 31-33, 68-71.
33. Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld, Annual Defense Department Report, FY 1978 (GPO, 1977), p. 24; "The Trend in the Naval Balance: A Fact Sheet," Office of Rep. Les Aspin (July 1976), p. 6.
34. Sergei G. Gorshkov, "Navies in War and Peace," Morskoi sbornik (serially published February 1972-February 1973), published as Red Star Rising at Sea, trans. Theodore A. Neely, Jr. (United States Naval Institute, 1974), pp. 119, 134.
35. Berman, Soviet Air Power in Transition, pp. 34-35; William Green and Gordon Swanborough, The Observer's Soviet Aircraft Directory (Frederick Warne, 1975), pp. 36-37; John W.R. Taylor, ed., Jane's All the World's Aircraft, 1977-78 (Franklin Watts, 1977), p. 422.
36. Figure calculated by Robert P. Berman, The Brookings Institution.
37. The propaganda effect was mixed, however, insofar as the aircraft were seen to have refueling and servicing problems enroute and only one-third of the promised flights were made. New York Times, August 26, 1970.
38. Berman, Soviet Air Power in Transition, p. 36.
39. As quoted by Foy D. Kohler, in House International Relations Committee, The Soviet Union: Internal Dynamics of Foreign Policy, Present and Future (GPO, 1978), p. 33.
40. Graham H. Turbiville, Jr., "Soviet Bloc Maneuvers: Recent Exercise Patterns and Their Implications for Europe," Military Review, vol. 58 (August 1958), pp. 26-27.

41. After the Act was signed some unverified reports appeared in the European press of unannounced Warsaw Treaty exercises, silence about which was a violation of the agreement. Ibid., pp. 28-32; "Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Final Act," The Department of State Bulletin, vol. 73 (September 1, 1975), p. 328.

42. Tass, February 6, 1978, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (February 6, 1978), p. VI.

43. Washington Post, September 25, 1978.

44. For example, on the creation of the bonds between Soviet and East German military personnel, see NPA Dr. Col. G. Jokel and others, "The Development of Combat Cooperation Between the GDR NPA and the Soviet Army During the 70s," Voyenne-Istoricheskiy Zhurnal (Military Historical Journal), no. 7 (July 1978), pp. 65-71, reprinted in Soviet Press Selected Translations distributed by the Directorate of Soviet Affairs, Air Force Intelligence (December 1978), pp. 341-50.

45. A.A. Grechko, The Armed Forces of the Soviet State 2d ed., trans. and published under the auspices of the U.S. Air Force (GPO, 1976), p. 341.

46. Tass, March 21, 1978, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (March 23, 1978), p. D1.

47. On exercises in Eastern Europe, see Turbiville, "Soviet Bloc Maneuvers," pp. 19-35.

48. Pravda, July 31, 1977, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (August 4, 1977), p. V4.

49. Donald C. Daniel, "Trends and Patterns in Major Soviet Naval Exercises," in Paul Murphy, ed., Naval Power and Soviet Diplomacy (GPO, 1977), pp. 222-24; Lt. Cdr. Bruce W. Watson, USN and Lt. Cdr. Margurite A. Walton, USN, "Okean-75," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, vol. 102 (July 1976), pp. 93-97; U.S. Senate, Committee on Armed Services, Fiscal Year 1977 Authorization for Military Procurement, Research and Development, and Active Duty, Selected Reserve and Civilian Personnel Strengths, Hearings, Part 10 (GPO, 1976), pp. 5316-27.

50. Anne M. Kelly, "Port Visits and the 'Internationalist Mission' of the Soviet Navy," in Michael McGwire and John McDonnell, eds., Soviet Naval Influence: Domestic and Foreign Dimensions (Praeger, 1977), p. 511.

51. Pravda, July 30, 1978, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (August 3, 1978), p. V4.

52. Gorshkov, "Navies in War and Peace," p. 119. Also see S.G. Gorshkov, Sea Power of the State, private translation (Moscow: Military Publishing House, 1976), p. 321. For some insights into the local reception of Soviet naval visits in third world nations, see Heidi S. Phillips, "Host Press Coverage of Soviet Naval Visits to Islamic Countries, 1968-73," no. CRC-283 (Center for Naval Analyses, June 1976).

53. FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (July 25, 1978), p. E3; and vol. 3 (September 19, 1978), p. E3.

54. Ibid., vol. 3 (September 11, 1978), p. E3.

55. Ibid., vol. 3 (July 26, 1977), p. E2.

56. Ibid., vol. 3 (December 12, 1978), p. G2.

57. Ibid., vol.3 (August 8, 1977), p. V4; Washington Post, October 27, 1977.

58. FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (January 12, 1978), p. F7; vol. 3 (April 12, 1978), p. N3; vol.3 (September 8, 1978), p. H4; vol. 3 (March 7, 1979), p. N1.

59. Ibid., vol. 3 (November 23, 1977), p. F12, and vol. 3 (September 11, 1978), p. E3.

60. Grechko, The Armed Forces of the Soviet State, p. 342.

61. Communist Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World, 1977 report no. ER 78-10478U (Central Intelligence Agency, November 1978), p. 4.

62. Dividing the value of Soviet arms deliveries by the value of total USSR and Eastern European arms deliveries, and then multiplying the percentage resulting by the total number of USSR and Eastern European advisers abroad. See Communist Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World, 1977, pp. 1, 3.

63. This definition was developed for an earlier examination of discrete political-military operations carried out by U.S. armed forces. The further elaboration upon this definition as well as much of the format of this study parallels that earlier effort. See Blechman and Kaplan, Force Without War, pp. 12-16.

64. The vast majority of these incidents occurred during the cold war. Since the early 1960s they have been few and far between, notwithstanding the dramatic attack upon and forced landing near Murmansk of a South Korean airliner in 1978. Washington Post, April 21-22, 1978.

65. New York Times, October 20, 1949, and October 20, 1969.

66. See Kelly, "Port Visits and the 'Internationalist Mission' of the Soviet Navy," pp. 513-14.

67. It is worth noting that Moscow's memory for this assistance is long. In 1978 a Soviet destroyer paid an official visit to the Sicilian city of Messina to help commemorate the 70th anniversary of an earthquake there in which Soviet navy men played a role in rescue operations. Krasnaya zvezda, October 4, 1978, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (October 11, 1978), p. E3.

68. Uri Ra'anan, "Soviet Arms Transfers and the Problem of Political Leverage," in Uri Ra'anan and others, eds., Arms Transfers to the Third World: The Military Buildup in Less Industrial Countries (Westview, 1978), p. 131.

69. See Keesing's Contemporary Archives 1957-1958, p. 16303.

70. Warned routinely, for example, are nations which house important U.S. military facilities. Hence in 1978, when Turkey decided to allow the United States to once again use various military installations, the Soviet military newspaper Krasnaya zvezda, quoting a Turkish newspaper, warned: 'in the event of another world war Turkey, where a substantial number of U.S. military installations are located, could undergo the tragedy of Hiroshima'. In FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (October 25, 1978), p. B5.

71. For those who may be interested, a computer file and referencing codebook including extensive descriptive data about each of the incidents listed in Appendix A is to be stored with the U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, Cybernetics Technology Office.

72. Research assistants spent roughly four work years searching out Soviet political-military operations.

73. New York Times, April 3, 1949 and September 1, 1951; Baltimore Sun, October 4, 1972; New York Times, February 17, 1973; New York Times, August 1, 1977. Where the news media are the source, the reporters themselves usually have either questioned these notes or attributed them to a clearly questionable source.

74. Systematic evaluations of U.S. and Soviet political-military behavior in the 1970 Jordanian crisis, the 1971 Indo-Pakistani war, the Berlin crises of 1958-59 and 1961, and the 1951 crisis over Yugoslavia are presented in Blechman and Kaplan, Force Without War, pp. 175-221, 257-473. The only later incident that might possibly have been paired with the Cuban missile crisis was the 1973 Middle East war. A comparison of the 1967 and 1973 wars in the Middle East seemed to recommend itself much more, however.

THE HISTORICAL RECORD



2-12

## Chapter 2

### AN AGGREGATE VIEW

The 187 incidents in which Soviet armed forces were used as a political instrument during the 35 years between June 1944 and June 1979 are surely a heterogeneous set. The military units turned to by Moscow and the political context leading to their interjection varied enormously, ranging from the timely visit by a single ship to improve relations with another nation--as, for example, when the cruiser Sverdlov joined the naval procession celebrating Queen Elizabeth's coronation in June 1953--to actions such as were taken in Hungary in 1956, the Cuban missile crisis, along the Sino-Soviet border in 1969, and the 1973 Middle East war.

To obtain a perspective on these incidents it is useful to examine their variation in geostrategic context and location, the parties that were involved in them, preceding events, and the types and sizes of Soviet military units that were employed and their activities. Of further interest are changes over time, linkages to wider developments in international relationships, domestic changes in the USSR and in the United States, and the strategic and conventional military capabilities of the superpowers. A critical preliminary distinction is that between coercive and cooperative Soviet political-military actions.

#### Soviet Foreign Policy and Discrete Political-Military Operations

As an instrument of diplomacy, Soviet armed forces usually were used coercively to deter an antagonist from behaving differently or to compel the performance of some action; for example, the exercises and other operations in the spring and early summer of 1968 to intimidate the Dubcek government, first to cut short and then to reverse the political change it was

shepherding in Czechoslovakia. At the same time, and often more importantly, coercive military activity may reinforce or improve relations with a friend that perceives this action to be supportive, as the regimes in East Germany and Poland viewed Soviet pressure on Czechoslovakia in 1968. 1/ The provision of Soviet missile crews and pilots to Egypt in 1970 to defend against deep penetration raids by Israeli aircraft reinforced Moscow's relationship with Cairo and the Arab world generally as much as it compelled Israel's termination of these attacks.

The Kremlin has also used military units cooperatively to improve relations with another nation or to obtain other foreign policy objectives without raising the specter of coercion. At important junctures, military visits--as by a Soviet MIG squadron to France in 1961 in advance of a state visit by Party Chairman Brezhnev and Premier Kosygin, and that by the guided missile destroyers Boyky and Zhguchy to Boston harbor in 1975 to strengthen detente--have often provided highly visible signs of regard and friendship. Along with expanded trade, cultural exchange and other means of diplomacy, these operations have served frequently to support the retention or development of important relationships. A similar purpose has been served by withdrawals of occupation forces; as, for example, by the departure of Soviet military units from Porkkala (Finland) and Port Arthur and Dairen (China) in 1955. Other Soviet withdrawals, such as those from Czechoslovakia at the end of 1945, from North Korea in 1948 and from Austria in 1955, have been designed to also achieve the retrenchment of Western armed forces.

Soviet military men were used coercively in 155 or roughly four-fifths of the 187 incidents uncovered; in the remaining 32 incidents Moscow

practiced cooperative political-military diplomacy. This imbalance is explained by several factors. First, there is much less alternative to the use of armed forces as a coercive instrument than to their usage as a cooperative means of diplomacy. Economic aid, special trade arrangements, personal visits and other forms of diplomacy have also been available to Soviet leaders for the improvement of foreign relationships; they also seem to have been more meaningful as expressions of friendship. As a coercive instrument, though, nothing is more meaningful than the use of military power. Second, and relating to our identification of a political use of armed forces, routine military activities were not considered incidents. Hence the very large number of Soviet naval visits paid to foreign ports each year that support Kremlin policy objectives diffusely be excluded by definition. So, too, as related earlier, are disaster relief operations and a number of other types of political-military operations in nonconflict situations. The number of opportunities for Moscow to curtail or terminate occupations has also been limited.

On the average, Soviet leaders turned to the military as a coercive and cooperative policy instrument within the terms of this study's definition 4.4 and 0.9 times per year respectively during the period examined. These averages are not norms, however. Consider figure 2-1. The annual frequencies of these two basic types of incidents are better understood in terms of the sub-periods shown in table 2-1. With reference to these eight segments, Soviet political-military operations will be examined in the following terms: actions to expand directly the realm of communism and to defend that community, initiatives to secure specific

Figure 2-1. Annual numbers of coercive and cooperative incidents.

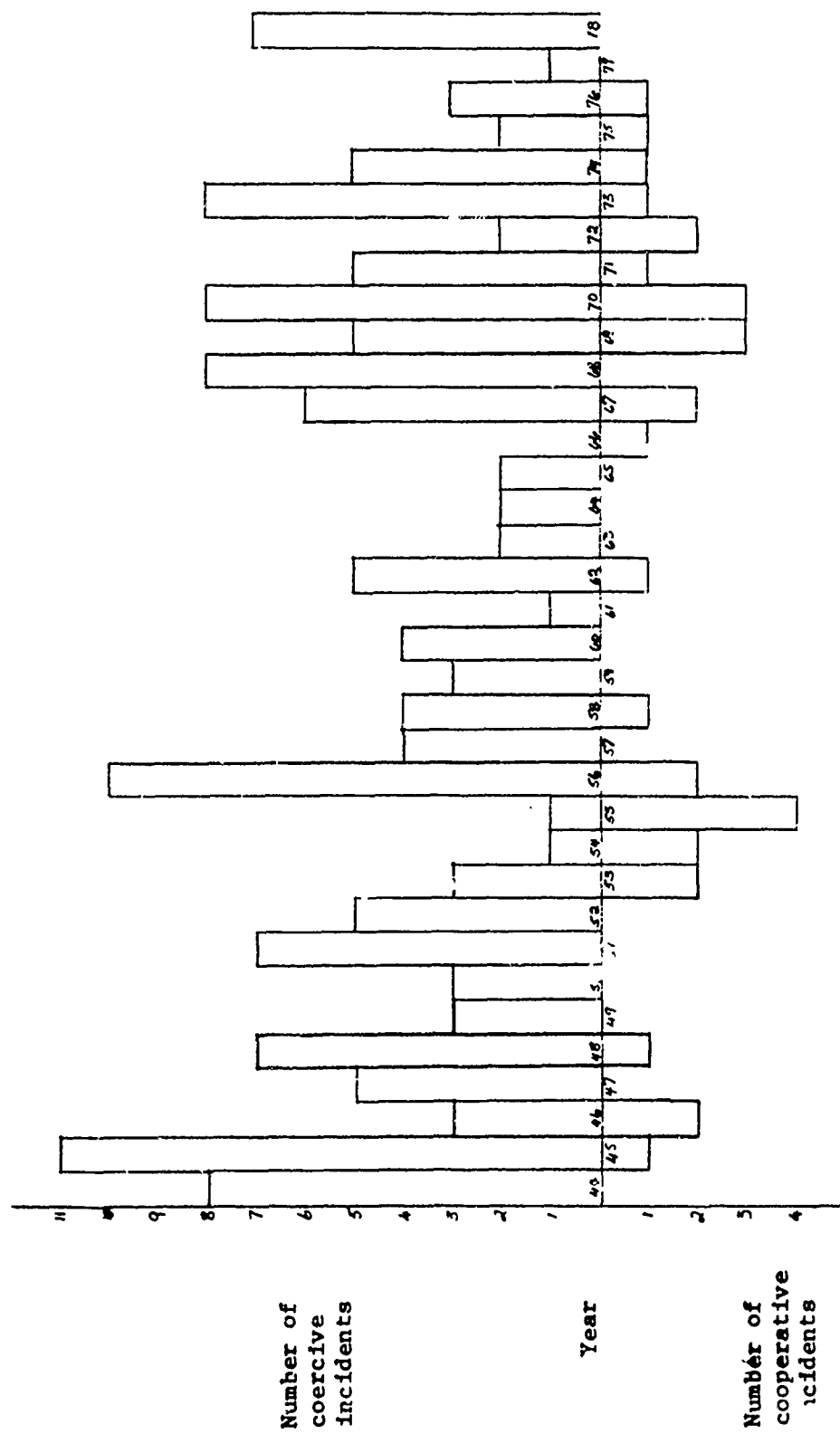


Table 2-1. Numbers and annual frequencies of coercive and cooperative incidents by time period <sup>a</sup>

<u>Time Period</u>	<u>Coercive incidents</u>		<u>Cooperative incidents</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Annual frequency</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Annual frequency</u>
June 1944-March 1946	21	11.5	3	1.6
April 1946-May 1953	32	4.5	1	0.1
June 1953-September 1956	6	1.8	10	3.0
October 1956-December 1962	29	4.6	2	0.6
January 1963-April 1967	7	1.6	1	0.2
May 1967-November 1974	46	6.0	13	1.7
December 1974-October 1977	5	1.7	2	0.6
November 1977-June 1979	9	5.4	0	0.0

a. For example, 29 coercive incidents took place between October 1956 and December 1962, a period of 6.25 years. Dividing 29 by 6.25 yields the frequency of 4.6 incidents per year.

security interests in the west and in the east, and Soviet attempts to increase or maintain influence in the third world. Tables 2-2 and 2-3 present percentages of coercive actions by strategic context and region for each of the time frames distinguished.

At the end of and immediately following the Second World War Soviet military power was used in adjacent areas in Europe and Asia to expand the Soviet domain and to support the establishment of communist regimes loyal to the USSR. 2/ Periodically thereafter, and particularly in response to eruptions of independent behavior in Eastern Europe, the Kremlin turned to Soviet military men to defend these gains. Armed forces were also used frequently in the pursuit of security objectives in the west, especially in Central Europe following the immediate postwar expansion until Stalin's death and after the restoration of Soviet authority in Eastern Europe in 1956-58 until the Cuban missile crisis. Thereafter occurred the full flowering of the Sino-Soviet conflict. This threat and Khrushchev's failures over Germany and Berlin and in the missile crisis seem to have led his successors to accept the lines drawn earlier in the west. At a later date this perspective was reinforced by the rise of power of the Social Democratic Party in West Germany. Thus after the early 1960s, consequential coercive Soviet political-military operations outside Eastern Europe and serving important USSR security interests directly were all in the east, pointed at China. Soviet military activities aimed at the third world were first evidenced following the 1956 Suez crisis, but it was not until the 1967 Middle East war that the USSR began to use armed forces to importantly affect developments in the Middle East, Africa and southern Asia.

**Table 2-2. Strategic context of coercive incidents a**

	Percentages of incidents during time frame								
Strategic context	Jun 1944- Mar 1946	Apr 1946- May 1953	Jun 1953- Sep 1956	Oct 1956- Dec 1962	Jan 1963- Apr 1967	May 1967- Nov 1974	Dec 1974- Oct 1977	Nov 1977- Jun 1979	Jun 1944- Jun 1979
Expansionary behavior	76.2	28.1	0	0	0	0	20.0	0	16.8
Relations with communist regimes	0	18.8	66.7	41.4	42.9	30.4	0	55.6	28.4
Security relations in the west	14.3	50.0	16.7	27.6	14.3	8.7	0	0	21.3
Security relations in the east	4.8	3.1	16.7	0	28.6	4.3	0	33.3	6.5
Third world influence	0	0	0	31.0	14.3	54.3	80.0	11.1	25.8
Other incidents	4.8	0	0	0	0	2.2	0	0	1.3

a. Percentages do not add to 100.0 due to rounding.

Table 2-3. Regional location of coercive incidents <sup>a</sup>

Regional location	Percentages of incidents during time frame									
	Jun 1944- Mar 1946	Apr 1946- May 1953	Jun 1953- Sep 1956	Oct 1956- Dec 1962	Jan 1963- Apr 1967	May 1967- Nov 1974	Dec 1974- Oct 1977	Nov 1977- Jun 1979	Jun 1944- Jun 1979	
Europe	66.7	65.6	83.3	58.6	57.1	30.4	20.0	11.1	49.7	
North Asia	28.6	21.7	16.7	0	28.6	6.5	0	33.3	14.2	
Persian Gulf- African Horn	4.8	12.5	0	3.4	0	19.6	0	11.1	10.3	
Middle East- North Africa	0	0	0	10.3	0	23.9	40.0	0	10.3	
South and Southeast Asia, Sub- Saharan Africa	0	0	0	20.7	14.3	17.4	40.0	33.3	12.9	
Cuba	0	0	0	6.9	0	2.2	0	11.1	2.6	

a. Percentages do not add to 100.0 due to rounding.



War's End and Cold War

In June 1944 the Red Army stormed across the prewar Soviet frontiers in the west in pursuit of the retreating armies of the Third Reich. Between then and March 1946 when military withdrawals were made from Iran, China and Bornholm Island (Denmark) and Moscow tempered its claims to the Turkish provinces of Kars and Ardahan and its demand for joint control of the Dardanelles, Soviet armed forces were used as a policy instrument principally to expand the territory of the USSR and communist community.

In Eastern Europe as well as in Southwest and Northeast Asia Stalin sought territorial concessions and political control, and used military power to support this design. Beyond territorial aggrandizement, which satisfied many interests, the Red Army also served in Europe and Asia to assure specific Soviet security objectives. Of the greatest importance was the removal of U.S. military forces butting, and in, what was taken to be the USSR's sphere of influence. Stalin refrained from attempting to establish puppet governments in Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia and China immediately after the war. Instead, Soviet and U.S. troops were withdrawn jointly from Czechoslovakia in December 1945 and from China in early 1946, and from Austria eventually in 1955. In Germany, where Soviet interest was strongest, Stalin decided only in 1947-48 on a course of full control and imposition of Soviet-style orthodoxy.

In the next seven years, framed at the outset by the containment thesis' taking hold in the United States and Moscow's acceptance of the "two camps" line, and at the close by Stalin's death in March 1953, Soviet military men served most importantly to support security objectives in Central Europe, the consolidation of the expanded Soviet sphere of influence and the defense of

that realm. Fully one-third of the USSR's political-military operations in these years were related to Germany or West Berlin, Moscow's concern focusing first on the USSR's future relationship between East and West (the 1948-49 crises) and then the prospect of West Germany's rearmament (the incidents in 1950-53). 3/ Shows of force were also directed in the west at Denmark, Sweden, Yugoslavia and Iran when those nations appeared drawn toward alliance with the United States and sought U.S. armaments.

Within the Soviet sphere during the late 1940s, the Red Army watched over the sovietization of Eastern Europe and North Korea. In February 1948 Soviet troops massed on Czechoslovakia's borders in support of the communist seizure of power in Prague. Moscow also found out, though, that it would have to defend positions if it wanted to keep them. Although Stalin chose not to invade Yugoslavia after the 1948 break with Tito and Soviet military men did not accompany North Korean troops in their invasion of South Korea in 1950, Soviet military power was yet made present in both of these instances, Moscow threatening intervention in Yugoslavia in 1949 and, after the onset of the Korean War, emplacing ground forces in China and later air and ground units in North Korea. Internal regime threats in Czechoslovakia and Albania in 1951 also were responded to by the emplacement of Soviet military units.

Cooperative Soviet political-military actions in the immediate postwar period and the remainder of Stalin's years were comprised of those four withdrawals already mentioned, three of which coincided with similar actions by the United States. Standing against these withdrawals were 53 coercive uses of military power.

The Soviet "Peace Offensive" and Resumption of Cold War

Stalin's successors quickly embarked on a "peace offensive" directed at the West such that more than three-fifths of the incidents that took place between June 1953 and September 1956 were cooperative ones. Thus for example, military controls were relaxed in Austria, a Soviet warship joined in the naval review celebrating Queen Elizabeth's accession to the throne in Great Britain, a special naval visit was paid to Sweden and, in 1955, Soviet troops withdrew from Austria and Porkkala (Finland).

In attempts to improve or reinforce relations with communist nations, Soviet military men were also withdrawn from Port Arthur and Dairen (China) and pointed naval visits were paid to ports in Yugoslavia, Albania and China. Moreover, of six coercive actions in this period, three were highly defensive in nature (East Germany and Bulgaria in 1953, and Poland in June 1956). In no instance did the Kremlin provoke a crisis in these years which, generally speaking, were marked by cooperative gestures to improve relations with the West and cooperative and coercive actions to maintain authority and influence with communist regimes.

In June 1956, three years after the first popular uprising in Eastern Europe (in East Germany in 1953), workers demonstrating in Poznan demanded political change in Poland and an end to Soviet domination. A month later, in the Middle East, President Gamal Abdul Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal. The surface outburst in the Polish streets was suppressed without much difficulty and for three months negotiations went on over the future of the Suez Canal. The ferment in Poland and elsewhere in Eastern Europe continued to increase however, as did Great Britain's and France's frustration in

dealing with President Nasser. Those eruptions in Poland and Hungary in October 1956 and the British-French-Israeli attack on Egypt that same month marked a hardening in Soviet attitudes toward heterogeneity among communist nations, an increased Soviet involvement in the third world and, as a consequence to both, increased East-West hostility. These developments were closely reflected in the Kremlin's use of armed forces.

Coercive, not cooperative, political-military operations filled the next six years and in as great a frequency as in the Stalinist period after the onset of the cold war. Of 29 coercive actions between 1956 and 1962, two-fifths were for the purpose of defending Soviet positions in Eastern Europe. Most of these 12 incidents were brought on directly or indirectly by the Polish and Hungarian crises, and all took place in the two years following those events. The 1958 withdrawal from Rumania, one of two cooperative actions in this six year period, signalled Moscow's confidence that its authority in Eastern Europe was satisfactorily restored.

Having reestablished control within its sphere of influence, the Kremlin then attempted to affect developments in the West, particularly West Germany's future relationship with NATO, the emplacement of nuclear weapons on West German soil, and Western access to and control of West Berlin. Including the 1958-59 and 1961 Berlin crises and the Cuban missile crisis, all of these Soviet probes were intended to directly support the USSR's security position vis-à-vis the United States and NATO. In contrast to the earlier "peace offensive" years, cooperative Soviet political-military operations directed toward the West were entirely absent during this period of high cold war.

A third type of incident during these years and one new in kind was the Kremlin's use of military power to contest for influence in the third world. Notwithstanding Moscow's threats during the Suez crisis, no Soviet military action to support Egypt was taken at that time. This form of entry into the third world first occurred during the Syrian crisis of August-October 1957. In the next half decade Soviet military units were also called upon in response to crises in Lebanon, Indonesia, the Congo and Laos. Soviet political-military actions prior to the Syrian crisis took place only in Europe or Northeast Asia or were related to Turkey and Iran. Three-fifths of these earlier incidents concerned, most directly, contiguous nations; all others were focused elsewhere in Europe.

#### Lulls and Storms

Following the Cuban missile crisis and until the Middle East crisis in the spring of 1967 that led to the June War, Soviet leaders shunned the military as a policy instrument. <sup>4/</sup> Military intervention in the third world was cut short and the only probe of the West--related to the 1964 Cyprus crisis--was a minor one. More noteworthy was a timely Soviet naval visit to France in 1966 coinciding with President Charles DeGaulle's weakening of French ties with the United States and courting of Moscow. Those several infringements upon Western access to Berlin in these years were essentially reactions to what Moscow perceived as provocations--for example, the Bundestag's meeting in West Berlin in April 1965. More important during this period were Soviet actions in the east in response to the USSR's worsening relations with China and, in particular, to Peking's questioning the demarcation of the Sino-Soviet border and provocation

of violent border clashes. The outbreak of the 1967 Middle East conflict was followed by something of a storm in Soviet political-military activity. Fifty-eight incidents or one-third of the total number of Soviet political-military operations in the 35 year period examined took place between the spring of 1967 and the end of 1974.

Causing Moscow great concern during this period was its loss of control in Czechoslovakia in 1968. The August invasion by the USSR and its allies followed a number of Soviet-led shows of force. Thereafter Moscow also saw fit on several occasions to threaten Rumania over the latter's independent behavior. Serious demonstrations in Poland in 1970 over price increases were a further cause of concern and political-military activity in the name of defending orthodoxy in Eastern Europe. Conflicts between the United States and other communist nations--that is, North Korea and North Vietnam--also led to political-military diplomacy by Moscow, and in 1969 regular naval visits supportive of Cuba were inaugurated.

After restoring its authority in Prague and placing Bucharest on notice, the Kremlin responded forcefully in early 1969 to provocation by Peking along the Sino-Soviet border. Following a Chinese ambush of Soviet troops in the Ussuri River area in March 1969, it appears that the USSR itself then provoked a series of clashes and, further raising the seriousness of this situation, ordered a large-scale buildup of Soviet forces in the Far East that did not peak for a half decade.

Related to the increased possibility of conflict with China and induced, perhaps, by the political change in West Germany in 1969, Soviet political-military operations directed at the West in the late 1960s and

early 1970s were largely cooperative in nature. Rather than provoke a crisis after the United States determined in 1970 that a Soviet strategic nuclear submarine base was being established in Cuba, Moscow quickly withdrew the offending submarine tender and related personnel. The only hostile military actions in the west were minor ones directed at Iran (1973) and Yugoslavia (1974) and attempts to weaken relations among NATO nations, as during the 1973 Cod War between Great Britain and Iceland and the 1974 Cyprus crisis. Small demonstrations hindering Western access to Berlin followed what Moscow again considered provocations by Bonn.

What gave this period further distinction was the USSR's widespread and sustained military involvement in the third world during these years. The Middle East was again the dominant focal point. Unlike its actions in the Syrian and Lebanon crises a decade earlier, though, these new interventions by the USSR included powerful thrusts in situations of intense violence, representing a strong Soviet commitment to allies and willingness to take risks in dealing with their adversaries. Beyond the Middle East, a sizable number of political-military operations--18 all told--were mounted in or adjacent to the Persian Gulf, the African Horn, South and Southeast Asia, and West Africa. As compared with those earlier forays in the Congo and Laos, these interdictions marked a qualitative increase in seriousness as well as an expansion in number.

The mid-1970s saw a new downturn in Soviet political-military activity. No operations were registered in Eastern Europe or the Far East and a sharp drop in the frequency of incidents was also evidenced in the third world where only Moscow's intervention in the Angolan civil war during late 1975-early 1976

was especially noteworthy. Those airlifts to the USSR's Angolan ally in early 1975 and to Algeria to support the Polisario rebels in 1976 were very small affairs and a 1976 naval presence complementing a U.S. appearance off the coast of Lebanon during the civil war in that nation was strictly pro forma. As will be seen, what was dramatic about the Kremlin's involvement in the Angolan conflict in 1975-76 was not the size of the Soviet forces that were used--only a small number of units were called upon--or an engagement by those units in violence. What caused consternation in the West was Moscow's logistical as well as other support of thousands of Cuban fighting men in Angola while the United States remained militarily apart from that conflict. Complementing a lower frequency in the number of Soviet coercive operations was a relative absence of discrete cooperative actions. The two that did occur both took the form of naval visits, one to the United States at the high point of detente in 1975 and the other to Italy following the 1976 elections there. Although the Kremlin did provoke NATO by its action in Angola, it thus also sought to use military units to improve relations with the United States and Europe. The only directly discordant note recorded was a missile firing into waters disputed with Norway.

This relative quiescence in discrete Soviet military operations was followed by a surge of activity at the end of the decade; not in a large number of hotspots in the third world where the danger of Soviet military intervention was perceived as serious by many in the West, but in support of the ruling regime in Ethiopia in particular and in East Asia where the Kremlin responded militarily to a number of initiatives by China. Even more so than the intervention in Angola two years earlier, the Soviet involvement in the Horn



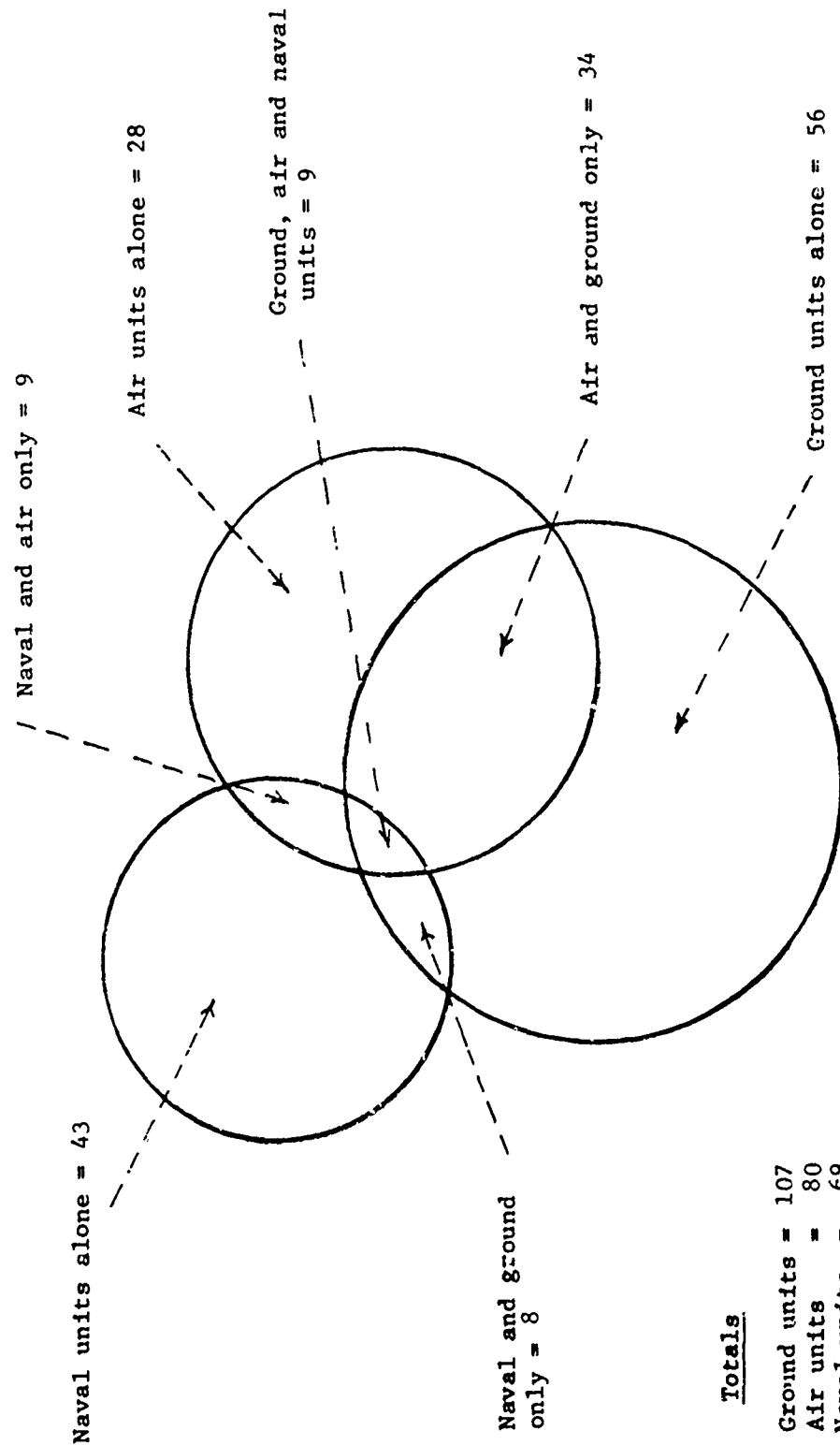
of Africa in 1977-78 constituted a singularly important action that was not complemented by other behavior that could be cumulatively perceived as a pattern of resort to coercive diplomacy in the third world. Indeed, such behavior was not otherwise practiced by the USSR in Africa, the Middle East or southern Asia. Following the winter of 1977-78, during which Soviet personnel also engaged in air defense activities in Cuba while the Cuban military presence in Africa was being expanded, the focus of Soviet political-military diplomacy shifted to Asia in response to: 1) Peking's unsubtle and hard-hitting anti-Soviet diplomacy aimed at alliance formation against the USSR; and 2) worsening relations between China and Vietnam, a Soviet ally. In the brief period between the spring of 1978 and the following winter Peking stimulated six coercive operations by Moscow, including actions on the Sino-Soviet border, an airlift to Vietnam and naval support of Hanoi, and a close-by warning to Japan. No discrete cooperative actions by Soviet armed forces units were detected during this period. 5/

#### Soviet Armed Forces Usage

The Kremlin turned most frequently to ground force units when looking to the military to underpin its foreign policy. Red Army men or ship-based naval infantry were used in 107 or 57 percent of the 187 incidents (see figure 2-2). Ground units alone were turned to in one-third of the 187 incidents, ground forces also participated in combined operations with air or sea units individually (34 and 8 incidents respectively) and with both of these other two basic force types together (9 incidents).

Land-based ground units were used in 105 incidents. In almost all,

Figure 2-2. Participation of ground, air and naval forces (numbers of incidents)<sup>a</sup>



a. Ground, air and naval units may have been used in an additional five, seventeen and eight incidents, respectively. Eighteen of these thirty matters of question, including fourteen of those related to air units, pertain to incidents that occurred in 1944-48.

if not every one of these actions, the participating troops were drawn from the Red Army. Those exceptions were several instances during the first postwar decade when naval infantrymen may have comprised the units in question. Ship-based infantry, either Red Army or naval troops, rarely played a role. They were definitely used apart from land-based units only once and together with the latter on only three occasions. 6/

Air units were used in 80 incidents, but infrequently alone. When Soviet leaders turned to these forces, it was usually to combat elements--that is, to fighter or bomber units--which played a part in almost one-third of the total number of incidents and in almost three-fourths of those operations in which aircraft were called upon. The other most frequently used aircraft type was transport aircraft (24 incidents). Reconnaissance aircraft and helicopters of various types were made use of rarely as instruments of foreign policy.

Although the Soviet navy was called upon least frequently as compared with ground and air units, naval units were used alone in 43 incidents--somewhat less than the figure for ground units, but more than the number of operations in which air elements were alone engaged. Called upon invariably when the navy was turned to were surface warships of cruiser, frigate, destroyer or escort classes. These types of vessels played a role in four-fifths of the operations in which naval vessels participated. Besides surface warships, Soviet decisionmakers turned most often to their submarine forces (16 incidents).

The Soviet navy has never procured aircraft carriers of the type displayed by the U.S. Navy since the Second World War. Vessels combining

the characteristics of a cruiser and carrier and capable of handling a number of V/STOL (vertical/short takeoff and landing) aircraft and helicopters were deployed first in the late 1960s. These Moskva-class and Kiev-class ships, as they are known, played a role in only two incidents, one being to support the Suez Canal clearing operation in 1974 and the other to shadow U.S. Sixth Fleet vessels covering the evacuation from Lebanon in June 1976.

This general picture of Soviet armed forces usage contrasts sharply with the United States experience since the Second World War. American policymakers have turned to the navy most frequently when they have used military power to support their diplomacy. In the three decades following the end of World War II, warships, and more often than not aircraft carriers, were called upon in four-fifths of the more than 200 instances when U.S. armed forces were used as an instrument of policy. 7/ U.S. ground forces were brought to bear in less than one-fourth of these incidents, and in those operations the usual element was a Marine force aboard amphibious vessels rather than land-based troops drawn from the U.S. Army.

The most similar aspect of the Soviet and U.S. experiences has been the usage of air units. Land-based (as distinct from carrier-borne) aircraft were used in 47 percent of U.S. political-military operations and in two-fifths of those Soviet actions under examination in this study. In part, the difference in U.S. and Soviet usage of ground and naval forces and the relative similarity in their land-based air force utilization has been related to the types of forces available to decisionmakers in Moscow and

Washington. Of more fundamental importance, however, have been the circumstances and places where the USSR and the United States have used military power as a policy instrument.

#### Ground Forces

Insofar as ground forces were used in more than one-half of the incidents in which Soviet military units were used to support foreign policy and four-fifths of those 187 actions uncovered were coercive, we would expect that these ground force operations would have been generally hostile. What is of interest is that they were almost always so. Only one-tenth of the incidents in which ground units participated were cooperative in nature. Such forces played a role in more than three-fifths of those Soviet coercive political-military operations and in less than one-third of those actions in which a military expression of friendship was offered. The cooperative actions consisted entirely of troop withdrawals or the relaxation of military controls in occupied countries.

Only rarely were Soviet ground units injected into conflictive situations between other nations when the USSR was not directly involved or into internal crises outside Eastern Europe. The great majority (86 percent) of the incidents in which ground forces were used related to the occupations growing out of World War II and threats presented to Soviet security directly, or to the loyalty and security of other communist regimes. These incidents took place in Eastern and Central Europe, Northeast Asia and Southwest Asia (Turkey and Iran). In essence, Soviet ground forces were used in countries contiguous to the USSR or were targeted at countries adjacent to ones in which the Red Army was resident.

The decline in hostile political-military actions directed at the West after the Cuban missile crisis and the rare utilization of ground units in third world actions meant a lessening usage of ground forces over time as compared with calls to sea and air units, at least until the late 1970s. As table 2-4 points out, whereas ground units played a role in every political-military operation in the 1944-46 period and more often than not during the next two decades, they were called upon in one-third of the incidents between 1967 and 1974, not at all between 1975 and 1977, but in almost half of those actions in 1978-79. The burst in the late 1970s, when ground units were used in four of nine incidents, was a function of the upsurge in Soviet coercive behavior responsive to aggressive Chinese diplomacy. Those 24 incidents in which ground units were turned to during the years 1967-74 and 1978-79 included 15 operations in response to threats presented to Soviet authority in Eastern Europe and by China; four relatively pro forma exhibitions over Berlin; and five actions in response to developments beyond Europe and Northeast Asia.

Ground units were used in a little more than one-tenth of the incidents in the third world. With the exception of the Indo-Pakistani War in 1971 when Red Army movements occurred on the Sino-Soviet border, all of these actions were related to developments in the Middle East. Four of these six incidents, and by far the more serious orchestrations, took place in the late 1960s and the 1970s.

In turning to ground forces, Soviet leaders regularly used units totalling more than a division in size; such was the case in nine out of ten of the incidents for which data were available. 8/ This absence of half

Table 2-4. Ground force usage in incidents over time

<u>Time period</u>	<u>Annual frequency of incidents in which ground units were used</u>	<u>Ground force of any size used as a percentage of all incidents</u>	<u>More than a division used as a percent- age of ground force incidents</u>
June 1944-March 1946	13.1	100.0	91.7
April 1946-May 1953	3.5	75.8	69.2
June 1953-September 1956	2.4	50.0	a
October 1956-December 1962	3.4	67.7	75.0
January 1963-April 1967	1.2	62.5	a
May 1967-November 1974	2.6	33.9	100.0
December 1974-October 1977	0	0.0	a
November 1977-June 1979	2.4	44.4	a

- a. For each of these four periods, data were available for less than five incidents. However, more than one division was used in six of the eight incidents for which data were available during these four periods.

measures to make the point when ground forces were called upon was thus a constant. To determine the fate of Eastern Europe and Northeast Asia after World War II, to actively suppress the rebellions in Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968, and to deal with the threat presented by China in the late 1960s, the usage of large armed forces is easily understood. However, in the many other instances when shows of force were made to threaten or cajole foreign leaders, it is plausible that instead of using more than a division, Soviet decisionmakers might have used a battalion, a regiment or only one division. A division after all comprises no small number of personnel. 9/ What explains this penchant for large-size demonstrations?

In part, this tendency may be related to the continuous availability in Europe and Asia of massive Soviet land forces. An estimated 12-15 million Soviet citizens were under arms at the end of the Second World War. Peace only brought this number down to about 4-5 million by 1948, after which Soviet troop strength was increased. Notwithstanding a decade of intermittent reductions in force that began in 1955, Moscow maintained at the end of this period an army of 140 divisions. After 1965 the number of Soviet divisions was again increased to include, in 1978, 31 divisions in Central and Eastern Europe, 44 divisions in the Far East and 94 divisions elsewhere in the USSR--169 divisions all told. 10/ Hence Soviet leaders have always had an ample supply of ground forces in Europe and Asia to carry out large-size shows of force without great strain.

More fundamentally, though, the large size and deployment of Soviet ground forces and their massive usage as a political instrument may be



related to essential USSR security concerns, historically based and ideologically driven or sanctified. First and foremost, Soviet leaders have always sought to establish and maintain in neighboring nations regimes friendly to the USSR. What the Kremlin has meant by friendly has been not merely an absence of claims upon or hostility directed at the USSR and normal trade and cultural relations. Both Stalin and his successors have interpreted friendly relations with neighboring nations (including Germany, Yugoslavia and Japan) as including an absence of non-Soviet foreign influence in these nations and, where possible, Soviet domination and control. Only then has Moscow felt assured that a neighbor would not act against the USSR. The upshot of this mentality has been a low threshold level of threat perception and a tendency to see any weakening or reversal of the Soviet position in adjacent lands calamitously. Moreover, any opportunity has been perceived as a gain necessary for Soviet security. The Romans were willing to deploy a full legion to besiege a few hundred rebels at Masada in the Judean desert (A.D. 70-73); the Kremlin has done no less to maintain its dominion. 11/ Insofar as the stakes have always been viewed as great, Moscow's regular usage of relatively large forces to achieve objectives is not so surprising.

Also of no small importance, in Europe and Asia the targets of Soviet coercive activities have been either nations fielding armies of some size and bearing modern weapons, or domestic movements capable of obtaining widespread support and mobilizing large numbers of citizens. These opponents then have been formidable; to make the point and coerce their behavior, the use of substantial forces has been considered necessary.

The same may be said about Soviet ground force actions related to the Middle East: The enemy in these instances was Israel, whose air and armored forces have been among the finest in the world.

#### Air Forces

Soviet air units were used almost exclusively as a coercive instrument. Combat, transport, reconnaissance or other military aircraft or helicopters played a role in 50 percent of Soviet coercive political-military operations and in only 9 percent (three incidents) of the cooperative actions. The usage of air units was not nearly as restricted to Europe and Northeast Asia as the utilization of ground forces. Whereas these two regions accounted for nine-tenths of the ground force actions, such was the case for only three-fifths of the air operations.

More closely paralleling the full set of incidents, one-fourth of Soviet political-military operations in which aircraft or helicopters played a role were in the third world. These incidents, including conflicts between foreign nations and internal regime threats of one kind or another, usually presented no direct or even indirect threat to the security of the USSR, but rather offered opportunities to gain or maintain influence. Air support was not only what was usually called for in these incidents; it represented a lesser form of commitment than did ground units. Soviet airpower played an even larger part in actions in Europe and neighboring areas in Asia aimed at expanding or defending Soviet authority and influence, being used in 37 percent of these incidents. Its most important role, though, has been to support Soviet security interests in direct confrontations with the West and China.

Although combat aircraft were used in only one-third of the incidents in Europe and Northeast Asia, these actions represented three-fourths of the operations in which such aircraft participated. Incidents related to Cuba account for another 5 percent. Only nine combat aircraft operations related to the third world; but of these, seven took place in 1967-79. Whereas combat aircraft were used in sizable numbers in Europe and Northeast Asia (more than one air regiment participated in two-thirds of these incidents), small units were the norm in the third world. No more than one air regiment was used in seven of the nine incidents in which combat aircraft were employed in these regions.

More regularly used in the third world were transport and reconnaissance aircraft and helicopters. Of 24 incidents in which transport units were used, two-thirds were in these lands, particularly the Middle East and Africa. Nine of twelve incidents in which reconnaissance aircraft or helicopters played a political role were also in the third world. The number of aircraft used in these actions typically totalled less than one air regiment. The Middle East accounted for all but one of those operations in which more than one air regiment was used.

This limited use of non-combat aircraft in third world areas as compared with the large-scale use of fighter and bomber aircraft in Europe and Northeast Asia further indicates not only the lesser commitment of Soviet policymakers in these third world incidents, but also Moscow's careful calculation in approaching those latter operations. Explanation for the typically large-size combat aircraft involvements in Europe and Northeast Asia is the same as that for the massive use of ground forces in

these regions, namely, the availability of forces, the regular perception of great threat or opportunity, and the capabilities of antagonists.

#### Naval Forces

The navy has been the principal tool of Soviet cooperative military diplomacy; Soviet warships participated in 59 percent of these incidents. Communist and third world nations with which the Kremlin was attempting to improve relations were the targets on a number of occasions, but the most frequent focus of these actions--archtypically a port call by one to three warships--were Western European nations when Moscow sought to improve relations at important crossroads or to otherwise cultivate special relationships. Discernible in each of these instances is a Soviet interest in weakening NATO unity or relations between a neutral nation and NATO.

Notwithstanding the navy's special role in cooperative Soviet military diplomacy and the fact that warships participated in only one-third of the coercive incidents, in 73 percent of the incidents in which naval units played a role, their purpose was to coerce. The navy, moreover, was the Kremlin's preeminent instrument of coercive military diplomacy when the Kremlin looked beyond nations contiguous to the USSR and Central Europe. Naval vessels participated in three-fifths of these incidents, air and ground units in one-half and one-fourth respectively. From another perspective this role was even more pronounced: Incidents in these distant locations accounted for 78 percent of the actions in which warships were used for coercive purposes, but for only 42 percent of Soviet air operations and 17 percent of those ground actions.

Coercive Soviet naval diplomacy began to be practiced regularly only

in the late 1960s; 72 percent of these operations occurred in the years 1967-79. Although their focus was usually in the third world (54 percent), warships were also used on a number of occasions to demonstrate support for distant communist regimes facing danger (North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba); to increase pressure on disloyal communist regimes (Yugoslavia in 1949, Poland in 1956 and more recently Rumania); in crises with the United States related to the Soviet presence in Cuba; and in crises between NATO nations that did not directly involve the United States. Together, these actions totalled more than one-fourth of Soviet coercive naval operations.

Surface combatants provided the usual expression of coercive naval diplomacy. Cruisers, frigates, destroyers or other escorts were involved in no less than 82 percent of these incidents. The typical operation took one of two forms: a visit or offshore presence by one or two such vessels, often accompanied by a submarine, minesweeper, amphibious craft, oiler or other type of ship, in a situation where violence was not immediately present; an offshore presence or naval demonstration of one form or another by a rather large number of surface combatants supported by other vessels. All those coercive operations involving one or more surface warships took place after 1966. 12/

Warships other than surface combatants--for example, submarines--were used much less frequently and almost never alone. The most likely reason for this is that Soviet leaders believed that surface warships would make a greater visible impression upon foreign leaders than other types of vessels; after all, it was perceptions that they were trying to influence. Two important developments beginning in the late 1960s, however, were the use of

amphibious vessels to transport foreign forces and military equipment and, in several instances, to raise the specter of Soviet ground units being landed ashore; and the new availability to Soviet leaders of Moskva-class and Kiev-class carriers. The latter vessels, although geared for anti-submarine warfare operations and not, like U.S. aircraft carriers, for projecting airpower ashore, nevertheless present a greater visual image of military power than other types of Soviet surface vessels. Amphibious vessels have been able to provide for the material needs of allies by transporting their personnel and equipment under the protection of the Red flag and by allowing for the nearby presence of Soviet ground forces.

Like the simple significance of the availability of ground and air forces in Europe and Northeast Asia, Moscow's frequent coercive usage of warships beginning in 1967 may be related in part to the forward deployment of the Soviet navy and the consequent readiness of naval vessels for participation in these operations. A continuous Soviet naval presence was established in the Mediterranean in 1954; in 1968 Soviet warships appeared in the Indian Ocean; and beginning in 1970 they were regularly in West African waters. The Soviet naval presence in the North Atlantic and Pacific Oceans also was enlarged during these years and in 1970 the Soviet navy held Okean, its first major worldwide exercise. 13/

These deployments allowed familiarity and greater confidence and provided a more readily available military option to Soviet policymakers. Psychologically and logistically it was easier to call upon and reinforce units already forward deployed than to send out warships from home waters to seas where a Soviet naval presence had not been established. No doubt

Moscow's confidence was strengthened further by the improved quality of Soviet warships by contemporary standards in the late 1960s as compared with the Soviet navy a decade earlier and years previous still. 14/

Soviet naval forces, like ground and air units, have been procured and deployed essentially for deterring attack on the USSR and missions of war, not discrete political operations. 15/ Their primary targets are U.S. ballistic missile and attack submarines and U.S. aircraft carriers, to prevent a nuclear attack on the Soviet Union and to increase the security of Soviet nuclear submarines. The presence of U.S. carriers and submarines in the North Atlantic, Pacific and the Mediterranean drew large Soviet deployments to these seas. The much smaller numbers of vessels flying the Red Star in the Indian Ocean and South Atlantic seem more directly related to foreign policy objectives.

In many instances the use of only small numbers of naval vessels appeared tailored to the situation at hand; for example, the deployment of only two warships near the coast of Ghana in 1969 after that West African nation had seized two Soviet trawlers was probably better suited to achieving the release of those vessels than was a large demonstration of Soviet naval power. In other instances, though, the fact that the Soviet naval presence was small seems to have reflected lesser capabilities--consider, for example, the deployment near Cuba of only a half dozen submarines during the 1962 missile crisis--or the desire by the Kremlin not to overcommit itself or act unnecessarily provocative in distant arenas; note, for example, the Soviet deployment of only two surface combatants in West African waters during the Angolan conflict in 1975-76.

Naval actions, though, imply smaller concern and greater hesitation than do the emplacement of ground and air forces which, once effected, afford less flexibility and appear a firmer pledge. In the third world, in supporting distant communist regimes, and in taking advantage of rifts within NATO, Moscow was willing to show off Soviet military power, to increase the risk to antagonists and sometimes to commit itself by the forward deployment of ground or air units, as when it provided Egypt's air defense in the early 1970s. Usually, though, Soviet leaders sought to retain a substantial degree of flexibility, which naval units were able to provide best of all insofar as they could connote definite interest while remaining ambiguous as a signal of commitment, being able to be advanced and retired from the scene with lesser disturbance to international relationships than could ground or air units.

The rare usage of ship-based infantry, even in crises, is a further connotation of Soviet concern to retain as much flexibility as possible when dealing with distant situations. The USSR currently maintains five naval infantry regiments, one each with the Northern, Baltic and Black Sea Fleets and two with the Pacific Fleet. 16/ The vast proportion of these troops are based in the USSR or aboard ships in home waters. Unlike the United States, which has deployed a Marine Battalion Landing Team (BLT) aboard amphibious vessels in the Mediterranean and two of these forces in the western Pacific for several decades, the USSR has maintained no units approaching this size at a distance. In part, this might be related to the Soviet navy's inability to provide tactical air support for naval infantrymen serving in seas far from the USSR. Another possibility, though,



is that Soviet leaders may have sought to avoid implying intervention by Red troops.

Nor have sizable Soviet naval infantry units been forward deployed at the outset of crises in preparation for the contingency of landing in support of an ally. When Israeli forces rapidly surrounded the Egyptian Third Army on the West Bank during the 1973 Middle East war and Cairo pressed Moscow in desperation, the Kremlin's ground force options were to alert airborne forces in the USSR or actually fly those units to Egypt. Not wanting to abandon its ally, but also seeking to hold its cards as closely as possible, Moscow chose the former course.

#### Activities of Forces

Table 2-5 presents frequencies of the activities Soviet forces engaged in during incidents. The first and larger group of activities listed under each major force type--ground, air and sea--comprise those that were coercive either in nature (for example, a blockade) or in the situational context of the incident (some naval visits, for example). The activities grouped secondly, below each major force type, comprise cooperative operations carried out by those force types.

The most frequent ground force activity was, quite simply, forward deployment--to guarantee Moscow's authority in neighboring nations, to insure the security of the USSR, or to maintain Soviet influence abroad. On only two occasions--Cuba in 1962 and Egypt in 1970--were ground force emplacements made outside Europe or Northeast Asia. Forces already emplaced were sometimes retained in position in a new political context or for different purposes. Two other frequent styles of expression were exercises (or other forms of demonstration) and blockades of varying severity of West Berlin or to contain

Table 2-5. Activities of Soviet armed forces

Force type and activity	Numbers of incidents									
	Jun. 1944 Mar. 1946	Apr. 1946 May 1953	Jun. 1953 Sep. 1956	Oct. 1956 Dec. 1962	Jan. 1963 Apr. 1967	May 1967 Nov. 1974	Dec. 1974 Dec. 1977	Nov. 1977 Jun. 1979	Jun. 1944 Jun. 1979	
<u>Ground units</u>										
Firepower usage	1	2	1	2	-	3	-	-	9	
Blockade	2	7	2	7	3	4	-	-	25	
Emplace. of forces	19	7	1	6	2	2	-	1	39	
Retention of forces	3	4	-	1	-	1	-	-	9	
Exercise or demonstration	1	7	1	7	3	10	-	3	32	
Other coercive action	1	4	1	1	-	1	-	-	8	
Termination of occupation	3	1	4	1	-	-	-	-	9	
Other cooperative action	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	
<u>Air units</u>										
Firepower usage	-	3	-	1	1	3	-	-	8	
Harass other aircraft	-	4	-	2	1	1	-	-	8	
Emplace. of forces	8	5	1	5	2	9	-	2	32	
Exercise or demonstration	-	10	-	3	1	8	-	1	23	
Transport equipment to actor	-	-	-	1	1	4	2	3	11	
Transport foreign forces	-	-	-	4	-	1	1	1	7	
Other coercive action	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	
Visit foreign nation	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	3	
Other cooperative action	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	

Table 2-5 (cont.)

Force type and activity	Jun. 1944 Mar. 1946	Apr. 1946 May 1953	Jun. 1953 Sep. 1956	Oct. 1956 Dec. 1962	Jan. 1963 Apr. 1967	May 1967 Nov. 1974	Dec. 1974 Oct. 1977	Nov. 1977 Jun. 1979	Jun. 1944 Jun. 1979
<u>Naval units</u>									
Harass or seize other ships	-	-	1	-	-	3	-	-	4
Establish presence at sea	-	3	-	2	-	12	2	2	21
Visit foreign nation	-	-	-	2	-	10	-	-	12
Transport foreign forces	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	3
Transport equipment to actor	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	3
Exercise or demonstration	-	2	-	3	-	3	-	2	10
Other coercive action	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Visit foreign nation	-	-	6	-	1	5	2	-	14
Other cooperative action	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	5

political disturbances in Eastern Europe.

Violent action by Soviet ground forces was infrequent and, until the Kremlin faced the upsurge of popular sentiment in East Germany in 1953, not notable. Of great significance afterward were the suppression of political change in Hungary in 1956 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968, the engagement in hostilities with China, and the air defense of Egypt. These actions say a great deal about what Moscow was willing to accept historically and the distance the Kremlin was willing to go when faced by those infrequent circumstances. It is worth adding that Soviet air defense units in Cuba in 1962 might have been prepared to respond militarily against a U.S. attack on that island. It is not unlikely that a Russian crew was responsible for shooting down a U.S. U-2 aircraft over Cuba during the missile crisis. Thus it might be inferred that when Moscow was willing to send ground units far afield, those units were deployed for more than demonstration purposes.

Emplacements and exercises were the principal ways in which air units were used to make a political point. Of particular significance, not only were Soviet air units deployed to the third world beginning in 1967; in several instances they appeared to engage in hostilities. More frequent, though, was the use of transport aircraft to rapidly move military equipment to the third world. In 1976 Soviet long-range transport aircraft were also used effectively to airlift Cuban troops to Angola.

Somewhat analogous to the forward deployment of ground and air units as a means of coercion, the most frequent activities of naval vessels were to establish a nearby "presence," visit a foreign port in support of an ally,

and exercise on the high seas. Truly violent action--that is, the use of gunfire or missiles--was not practiced in any instance. Perhaps the most noteworthy action in this direction was the harassment of U.S. warships in the Sea of Japan after the U.S.S. Pueblo was seized by North Korea in 1968. Soviet naval vessels were also used to transport military equipment to third world nations and to transport military units of third world nations.

#### Force Movements

Forces already in the theater where an incident was focused were alone deployed forward in 61 percent of the incidents. Retention of units in place and withdrawals accounted for a further 5 and 6 percent, respectively. Out-of-theater forces alone were moved forward in only 16 percent of the incidents. Both in- and out-of-theater units were forward deployed in no more than 12 percent of the cases.

In broad terms, the preponderance of in-theater actions is explained as follows: Large units were deployed within theaters where Soviet security interests were great, where Moscow intended to provoke incidents, or where the Kremlin's anxiety threshold was low and provocation was expected--that is, in Eastern and Central Europe and Northeast and Southwest Asia; and these situations did not get out of hand in terms of Soviet regional military capabilities. Excluding rearward movements, in-theater units were thought adequate in as many as 91 percent of the incidents in Central Europe and in 95 percent and 81 percent of those actions in nations contiguous to the USSR in the west and east, respectively. The comparatively lower figure relating to Soviet Asia might be expected to rise over time if there are further incidents between the USSR and China, considering the large Soviet military

buildup along the Sino-Soviet border that was completed in the early 1970s. Only in-theater units were deployed in connection with a border clash reported to have occurred in late 1974, a major Soviet military demonstration in early 1978 and, shortly thereafter, a brief Soviet border incursion into China.

In-theater units were fully up to the expansion of Soviet authority at the end of the Second World War. Out-of-theater units may have been called upon, however, in up to one-fifth of the coercive operations directed at insuring the loyalty or security of communist regimes. Such deployments were much less frequent when Moscow felt the USSR's security was threatened in the west or sought to gain advantage in that direction as compared with such incidents in the east. In-theater units alone were relied on in more than 90 percent of the former, but in only three-fifths of the latter.

Three-fifths of the incidents in which only out-of-theater forces were forward deployed took place in the third world as did two-thirds of the operations requiring both in- and out-of-theater forces. Although the USSR did establish continuous naval deployments in the Mediterranean, Indian Ocean and West African waters between 1964 and 1970, the proportion of incidents in which out-of-theater forces were called upon to respond in the third world was virtually the same in the two activist periods of 1956-62 and 1967-74. Of great importance, however, the proportion of actions in

which in-theater units were not at all available dropped from 60 percent in the first period to 33 percent in the second. 17/ It is reasonable to suppose that in-theater units might have been available much less often for coercive actions than cooperative ones in that the former were more crisis responsive or otherwise took place on shorter notice. This was not the case, however. The comparative figures for coercive actions alone in the two activist periods were 56 percent and 31 percent, respectively.

Although Soviet leaders found it necessary to turn to forces distant from the scene in almost two-thirds of the incidents between 1967 and 1974 when third world coercive actions were conducted, the Kremlin was also able to turn to units already within the theater on two out of every three occasions. Those operations requiring both in- and out-of-theater deployments were almost always made in response to interstate crises—that is, in conflictive situations between nations. In-theater or out-of-theater units alone tended to be used in response to intra-state situations; those latter actions also generally required the use of only lower levels of force. The interstate incidents did not necessarily present greater opportunities or threats to Soviet interests. Clearly, though, they did require a greater degree of military effort.

Out-of-theater units were called upon most frequently to respond to incidents in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and Southeast Asia. In-theater units alone were able to be turned to in only one-fifth of these incidents. By way of comparison, this last was true of two-fifths of those operations directed at the Middle East and North Africa. This is explained by the large Soviet naval presence in the Mediterranean since the late 1960s.

### Major Combined Operations and Confrontations

What was the context of the most substantial displays of Soviet political-military power? This question has already been considered to an extent in those separate examinations of Moscow's usage of ground, air and sea units. It is of further value, though, to look at a subset of incidents including only large combined operations, defined here as actions in which two of the three following size forces participated: a ground force larger than one division; a combat air unit larger than one regiment; a naval force including more than five surface combatants. It is not suggested that each of these three force elements is the equivalent of the other two, but rather that each represents a large combat potential in its own terms. The choice of the particular force levels is not entirely arbitrary. These unit sizes represent, to a degree, modal choices by the Kremlin at the upper end of each of the three scales.

Soviet combined military operations meeting the above definition were conducted in 18 percent of the 155 coercive incidents and may have taken place in an additional 10 percent. More than four-fifths of this total subset of 44 actions were directed at Europe or contiguous territories in Asia and three-fifths of the total occurred before Stalin's death. Those actions in this first decade were largely aimed at expansion in the context of the end and immediate aftermath of the Second World War. Other operations during this period focused on the defense of those new positions and attempts to influence the Western allies' policies toward Germany.

Table 2-6 lists the incidents that took place after Stalin died. The difference between these and those earlier operations lies in the prominence after Stalin's death of actions to maintain Soviet authority in Eastern



Table 2-6. Major coercive actions by USSR forces since Stalin's death

Crisis in Hungary	November 1956
U.S. intervention in Lebanon	July 1958
Western presence in Berlin	July 1961
Cuban missile crisis	October 1962
Border dispute with China	? 1965
Border dispute with China	February 1967
Relations with Czechoslovakia	July 1968
Relations with Czechoslovakia	August 1968
Relations with Rumania <sup>a</sup>	August 1968
Security of regime in Czechoslovakia	October 1968
Border dispute with China	March 1969
Security of Egypt	February 1970
West Germany-USSR treaty <sup>a</sup>	October 1970
Relations with Rumania <sup>a</sup>	June 1971
Arab-Israeli war - 1	October 1973
Arab-Israeli war - 2	October 1973
Cyprus conflict	July 1974
Relations with China <sup>a</sup>	April 1978
China-Vietnam War <sup>a</sup>	February 1979

a. Definitional criteria possibly met.

Europe (32 percent), the need beginning in the 1960s to respond to threats presented by China (26 percent), and Soviet willingness in the late 1960s and early 1970s to become heavily engaged militarily in the Mediterranean area (21 percent). The Berlin and Cuban missile crises, representing the great probes of the Khrushchev era, are now two decades in the past and do not seem likely to recur. The demonstration of support for East Germany in 1970 following the signing of the Treaty of Moscow, rather than being perceived as a Soviet threat, was a reaffirmation of the USSR-GDR alliance and more illustrative of the cold war's ending than anything else.

#### Strategic Nuclear Forces

It is important to finally consider the use--or more accurately, the apparent non-use--of Soviet strategic nuclear forces as a political instrument. Although on a number of occasions and particularly during the Khrushchev era, Soviet leaders verbally or by other diplomatic gesture raised the prospect of using nuclear weapons against foreign nations, in only one instance were we able to locate data confirming that the USSR raised the alert status of forces presumably included in strategic nuclear attack plans during a crisis. Not surprisingly, that incident was the Cuban missile crisis. <sup>18/</sup> No information was discovered that would deny the statement that the USSR has never redeployed strategic force units during a crisis. To be very confident about these matters is impossible, however.

We were unable to find any useful information about actual crisis communications between Soviet political leaders, military commanders, and

the operators of missile-laden submarines, land-based missiles and nuclear-capable bombers. Not found either were data about what, if anything, went on during periods of tension at Soviet air or submarine bases--that is, about activities that might indicate an increase or absence of change in alert status. Not finally could we find numerical counts of strategic submarines and aircraft at specific locations during crises. Bearing this ignorance in mind, it would not be shocking to learn that at least some Soviet strategic units had their alert status raised or were redeployed during the crisis with China in 1969 or the 1961 Berlin crisis, or that Soviet strategic units were redeployed during the missile crisis. Other incidents in which such actions would not have been incredible are the 1973 Middle East War, the 1968 Czechoslovakia intervention and even the 1958 Offshore Islands crisis, the 1956 Suez crisis and the intervention in Hungary that fall.

What can perhaps be said about publicly unknown demonstrative uses of Soviet strategic forces during crises with confidence is the following: First, the Kremlin did not attempt to draw foreign attention to these actions, unlike the behavior of U.S. leaders who on a number of occasions since the Second World War did not want the possibility that the United States might resort to nuclear weapons to be discounted. Second, if the targets of such Soviet moves perceived this behavior, they did not make that information public. Valuable files about these matters are undoubtedly available on a classified basis within the U.S. and perhaps other governments. Whether even they might be definitive is impossible to tell from the outside.

Having confessed a failure to locate more than one incident in which

Soviet strategic forces were used as a political instrument within the bounds of our definition, it is worth mentioning why this could be an accurate finding. For one thing, political leaders in Moscow, as compared with U.S. policymakers, may have been more concerned historically with the problem of command and control. The normal levels of alert of Soviet strategic forces are much lower than those of U.S. strategic forces and in crises Soviet leaders may have been above all else anxious to restrict the risk of accident or unauthorized action. As related elsewhere:

Something is far more likely to go wrong when forces are spring-loaded for action than when they are at rest. An unauthorized or accidental launching of nuclear weapons à la Dr. Strangelove, is more likely in a force at high readiness than in one at low readiness. 19/

Second, when the strategic position of the USSR was one of gross inferiority and mutual assured destruction was not certain, Soviet leaders may have considered the orchestration of nuclear forces during the Suez, Offshore Islands or Berlin crises, for example, profoundly dangerous insofar as the United States might have been provoked to carry out a preemptive first strike. Third, if a discrete use of strategic nuclear units failed to deter or compel Western behavior in an era of nuclear inferiority, what then?, Soviet leaders might have asked themselves. A nuclear attack on Britain, France, West Germany or Taiwan? Or one on the United States? Except as concerned the future of West Germany, to take this path was to accept a course of national suicide on behalf of uncertain allies that were pursuing their own local objectives. Insofar as the Kremlin perceived its behavior over Berlin and the PRC's shelling of the Offshore Islands as probes, almost certainly it anticipated the possibility of having to

back off in the face of strong U.S. responses. To blink after escalating to the nuclear level was to brook an incomparable diplomatic disaster--as Khrushchev learned in the Cuban missile crisis. The Soviet interest was to keep the focus on conventional capabilities in Europe and Asia.

Prior to the full-scale suppression in Hungary in 1956 and August 1968 entry into Czechoslovakia, Moscow was given strong reason to believe that these acts would not evoke a Western military response. To alert or deploy strategic forces concurrently with these interventions could be reasonably considered by the Kremlin as unnecessary political provocations of the West. Besides being unwilling to itself go to the nuclear level on behalf of Egypt following the U.S. DEFCON 3 alert during the 1973 Middle East war, the Kremlin may have perceived this too to be an act unnecessary to the fulfillment of any immediate Soviet objective or other interest. That the USSR did alert or deploy strategic force units during the 1969 Sino-Soviet crisis when this threat was raised otherwise diplomatically is more plausible.

#### The United States as an Actor

The United States was an actor in 61 percent of the incidents in which USSR military units were used coercively; U.S. armed forces were used as a policy instrument in at least one-half of those situations in which Washington chose to become involved. 20/ The United States was not a participant in incidents between the USSR and People's Republic of China and tended to steer clear of Kremlin actions to maintain its authority in Eastern Europe. The superpowers confronted each other most regularly on the periphery of the Soviet sphere of influence in the west, and in the third world.

Although the stakes may have been high and the United States or the Soviet Union were often prepared to become engaged more heavily if necessary, small military confrontations or dual appearances on the scene by U.S. and Soviet military units occurred much more frequently than did situations in which Moscow and Washington ordered the deployment or alert of very large-size forces. The two Germanys and the Middle East were the places of most frequent heated contact.

U.S. armed forces were used almost always to support allies suffering Soviet pressure directly or in a conflictive situation with a Soviet ally. The United States backed its NATO allies in Europe, mutual defense treaty allies and CENTO and SEATO members and protocol nations in Asia, and various friends and clients in the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa. Alongside of or depending on the USSR in these incidents were the bloc nations in Eastern Europe, the USSR's other fraternal allies (North Korea, North Vietnam, Cuba, and China until the late 1950s), and Moscow's respective allies and clients in the third world.

The postwar occupations were established by mutual agreement. Notwithstanding their suspicion of each other, the entry of both U.S. and Soviet troops into Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, China and Korea at the end of World War II did not lead immediately to a sense of confrontation where U.S. and Soviet lines met. In later years, moreover, it was only in Europe that the USSR or United States led the way toward confrontation. Both sides viewed their behavior in this region necessitated by critical security interests. Elsewhere the superpowers tended to be drawn in by regional antagonists, as in Asia by North and South Korea and by India and

Pakistan, and in the Middle East by the Arab-Israeli conflict and strife between allies in the Arab world.

Washington and Moscow were similarly enticed into a number of internal conflicts, including the civil war that resumed in China after Japan's surrender, and ones in Lebanon, Indonesia, Laos and the Congo in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In these instances, however, the USSR and United States did not confront each other militarily as they did in those interstate crises cited above. The tendency in internal situations rather was for one or both of the superpowers to play only a supportive role or to orchestrate a show of force in a way implying an intent not to be drawn into a military confrontation--for example, the Soviet exercises in the USSR's Trans-Caucasian and Turkestan military districts following the U.S. intervention in Lebanon in 1958.

The superpowers did not both use their armed forces in response to an internal crisis after the early 1960s. One reason for this was perhaps the heightened opposition within the international community to intervention in the domestic affairs of third world nations. A recognized government could obtain the military backing of one superpower, but it became increasingly costly for the other superpower to back its internal opposition overtly. If an internal crisis developed into one between nations, as the 1970 Jordan crisis did when Syrian armored units crossed the Jordanian border, the barrier to military involvement by both the United States and the USSR was lowered insofar as the conflict became one between client states. Moreover, while covert action could weaken a regime, the prospect of a discrete political-military operation being able to bring down a regime was almost

always small. Large-scale military aid and superpower armed forces support given to an established government was a more certain ticket.

Military involvement by both superpowers was possibly more likely in an internal crisis when no recognized government existed, as in Angola in 1975-76. But even in that instance the USSR became heavily involved militarily only after it was clear that the United States would not do so and that the Kremlin's client already had the upper-hand politically in the international community. That the United States did not use military force in Angola and the USSR waited as long as it did was also indicative of the relative inability of non-state actors to gain the superpowers' full adherence to their cause. Playing a further role after the early 1960s were the greater caution of Khrushchev's successors and the increased opposition in the United States, as related to the Vietnam War, to new foreign entanglements. Backing a fraternal ally, alliance member or a nation with which there existed long-time ties of interest or friendship was one thing; it became quite another to use military force to support only a potential friend.

Further along this line, after the Cuban missile crisis neither the United States nor the USSR attempted to make gains at the expense of the other by provoking the other directly with military means. Concomitantly there occurred no crisis confrontations between the North Atlantic and Warsaw Treaty nations. While the superpowers became entangled supporting friends elsewhere, their European allies, although interested bystanders, found no reason to lessen the pace of improving relations with one another.

U.S. military men played a role in a dozen incidents in which the



Kremlin coercively used forces meeting the above definition and in another eleven in which ground, sea or air units alone of a size large enough to meet the definition were used. For the most part, these 23 incidents (see table 2-7) may be grouped in the following terms: joint occupations at the end of the Second World War; cold war crises between the superpowers directly or indirectly; conflicts between U.S. and Soviet allies related to the Middle East.

Of the greatest importance is the fact that with the exception of the incident in Southeast Asian waters in May 1972, all of those confrontations after the Cuban missile crisis were the result of situations that entrapped the superpowers; neither the USSR nor the United States planned or initiated these incidents. Even in the Cyprus crisis, when the USSR did appear to act in a way adding further to NATO's disarray, Moscow had images to protect, both as a power to be reckoned with in eastern Mediterranean regional affairs and as a Warsaw Treaty ally (of Bulgaria). As compared with those other incidents listed in table 2-7 since the missile crisis, this incident and that in May 1972 were the ones in which the sense of superpower military confrontation was weakest. Although both the Soviet Union and United States used armed forces to signal interest and concern during these years, the prospect of violent conflict between the superpowers was not great at all.

Very large Soviet and U.S. naval forces played a role in all but one of the incidents following the Cuban missile crisis listed in table 2-7. The threat of major Soviet ground unit involvement arose in three of these incidents; Soviet combat air units were deployed in none. Thus generally speaking, after 1962 superpower military confrontations--at least in terms

Table 2-7. Incidents when U.S. and major USSR armed forces were used <sup>a</sup>

Political future of Czechoslovakia	January 1945
Political future of Germany	January 1945
Political future of Austria	March 1945
Political future of China	August 1945
Political future of Korea	August 1945
Economic influence in Manchuria	November 1945
Security of Port Arthur and Dairen	February 1946
Dispute over Turkish provinces and Dardanelles	March 1946
Future of West Germany and Berlin	June 1948
Security of China during Korean War	Late 1950
Security of North Korea during Korean War	? 1951
U.S. intervention in Lebanon	July 1958
Western presence in Berlin	July 1961
Emplacement of missiles in Cuba	July 1962
Cuban missile crisis	October 1962
Egypt-Israel political crisis	May 1967
Arab-Israeli war	June 1967
Seizure of U.S.S. <u>Pueblo</u> by North Korea	January 1968
Jordan-PLO-Syria conflict	September 1970
U.S. response to N. Vietnam Easter Offensive	May 1972
Arab-Israeli war - 1	October 1973
Arab-Israeli war - 2	October 1973
Cyprus conflict	July 1974

a. USSR used ground units larger than one division, more than five major surface combatants, or more than one air regiment.

of the proximity of military units--took place at sea. There can be little doubt that this was heavily related to the responsive rather than initiatory character of the USSR and U.S. involvements in these situations and concern by both Moscow and Washington to retain maximum flexibility while issuing political-military signals. Moscow's threat to deploy airborne units during the 1973 Middle East war was made only after Israeli forces surrounded the Egyptian Third Army on the West Bank following the cease-fire, leaving Cairo exposed.

The Cuban missile crisis seemed to teach the superpowers that direct provocation could be extremely dangerous, that the course of such a crisis could not be planned, and that withdrawal could be exceedingly difficult. A lesson of the October War was that simply not seeking a game of chicken was not enough; friends could yet create or get themselves into a situation where one or both superpowers felt compelled to lend a hand. Strutting about a naval task force does not lower the threshold to superpower conflict as much as other military actions can, but when friends confront each other, the superpowers may be called upon to do more and can find refusal difficult. The necessary rule would seem to be a warning by each superpower to its friends that defense support is one thing, but that they have no insurance on the other side of the line.

An examination of U.S. behavior during the quarter century of 1956-79 seems to lead to the conclusion that the United States became less inclined toward confrontation with the USSR during the course of these years. If the three activist periods in this era are looked at alone, we find that U.S. armed forces were turned to in up to two-thirds of the incidents in which

the Kremlin ordered coercive military operations in 1956-62, but in no more than one-third of those in 1967-74 and in only one-fifth of the incidents in 1977-79. Of the two other periods in these years, U.S. military operations occurred in almost three-fourths of those coercive incidents in 1963-67 and in two-fifths of those in 1974-77. The higher frequencies in the two periods of lesser activity by the USSR do not indicate greater activism, but rather continued U.S. willingness to confront the USSR to a limited extent. In neither of these two periods did the superpowers face off in a major military confrontation.

In broad terms, what appears to have happened was the following: First, the Cuban missile crisis signalled an end to a period of Soviet probes aimed directly at the West to which the United States regularly responded on the basis of deeply felt security interests. Second, in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the extended thesis of containment made it imperative to anticipate and meet Soviet threats in the then emerging third world. In some instances--as, for example, in the Congo and Laos--U.S. actions, rather than anticipating Soviet intervention, may in fact have provoked that involvement. In the next several years the USSR did not use military power provocatively either in Europe or the third world and chose not to respond seriously to the deepening U.S. involvement and then full entry into the war in Southeast Asia. Other U.S. political-military operations in these years were focused heavily in the Caribbean area. With the exception of the fighting in Yemen, major conflictive situations did not develop in the Middle East during that time. Although the Kremlin may well have become deeply involved in a serious Arab-Israeli

confrontation had one occurred then, Moscow was not prepared to become engaged in more distant situations in South Asia, the Persian Gulf or sub-Saharan Africa, let alone in the Caribbean.

When the USSR responded to threats presented in Eastern Europe and by China in the late 1960s, the United States determined to steer clear of these incidents. At the same time, the continued absence of hostile Soviet behavior directed at Western Europe and then dramatically improved relationship between the USSR and West Germany meant for an absence of superpower confrontation over the Eurasian Cape. Those confrontations that did take place were occasioned by interstate crises in the Middle East and South Asia, and Moscow's increased, though still very limited, willingness to support communist allies outside Eastern Europe vis-à-vis the United States. The United States did not, however, militarily challenge the large number of Soviet political-military operations directed at supporting third world regimes against internal threats.

During the next several years (1974-77) the Middle East and South Asia were relatively quiescent; and while the United States withdrew completely from Indochina, the USSR showed itself unwilling to support provocative behavior by North Korea--consider Moscow's non-response to the United States display of force following the murder of two U.S. Army officers by North Korean soldiers in the Korean demilitarized zone in 1976. When U.S. and Soviet military forces did appear together on the scene of a conflict in the third world, the potential for serious confrontation was minimal, certainly insofar as U.S. objectives and intentions were concerned. When the Kremlin airlifted armaments to Algeria in early 1976 destined to support

the Polisario rebels in the former Spanish Sahara, the U.S. response was to send the Sixth Fleet flagship Little Rock to visit Morocco; and when U.S. and Soviet warships appeared together in the eastern Mediterranean in June 1976, the occasion was the U.S. evacuation from Lebanon.

Notwithstanding U.S. rapprochement with China, Washington remained wholly unwilling to play a military role in confrontations between the USSR and China in the late 1970s. When the Carter administration did decide to show U.S. interest in the Somalian-Ethiopian conflict in 1978, the means chosen was a very small naval presence in the Red Sea. Although the United States would probably have acted forcefully in any serious Arab-Israeli confrontation and have opposed Cuban armed forces supported violence in the Caribbean area, U.S. willingness to become militarily engaged elsewhere in the third world was minimal both where the USSR was and was not involved. The one other dual appearance, and one which well describes the reality of U.S. and Soviet military activity toward each other in the late 1970s, was a feather-strutting of continued rights by each superpower in Berlin in early 1978. 21/

#### Correlates of Coercive Soviet Diplomacy

Chapters three, four and five pursue in greater depth an historical evolutionary perspective of the circumstances in which coercive Soviet political-military operations have occurred and Soviet force usage in these incidents. Respectively, these chapters examine actions by Moscow: 1) to expand its authority around the periphery of the USSR and to insure the loyalty and alliance of communist regimes; 2) to insure the security of the USSR; 3) to increase and maintain Soviet influence in the third world. It is interesting to

consider finally in the way of aggregate analysis whether the annual frequencies of Soviet coercive actions in toto or of those incidents falling into each of the above three subsets are statistically related to certain indices reflecting international and domestic changes that might have influenced Soviet decisionmakers in relatively straightforward and simple incremental fashion.

Did the USSR engage in coercive political-military diplomacy more frequently when its strategic nuclear capabilities vis-à-vis the United States improved? When the Soviet economy or defense spending expanded more rapidly? When U.S. confidence faltered or Presidents of the United States were politically weaker or U.S. defense spending was in decline? When tension grew between the Soviet Union and the United States? Or did the USSR simply act and react to some proportion of threats and opportunities as they arose? To get at answers to these questions, the following indicators were examined as independent variables: the ratios of U.S. to Soviet strategic nuclear delivery vehicles and strategic nuclear warheads; 22/ percent changes in the gross national product of the USSR and Soviet defense spending; 23/ Standard and Poor's average annual composite stock price index which, discounted for inflation and real economic growth, presents itself as as indicator of U.S. buoyancy; 24/ the average annual percent of those interviewed in the Gallup poll who voiced approval of the President's performance; 25/ the percent change in outlays (spending) by the U.S. Department of Defense; 26/ indices of behavior directed by the superpowers at each other used by the Department of Defense for general crisis forecasting; 27/ a list of crises compiled exclusively from Soviet sources. 28/

No significant correlation was found between either of the two indicators of the strategic nuclear balance that were utilized and the overall annual number of Soviet coercive actions or those incidents in each of the three individual subcategories that were examined. 29/ This is true of the period in full since the Second World War as well as of the post-Khrushchev era which was considered independently. However, these correlations, while small and statistically insignificant, were almost uniformly negative--that is, as the USSR closed the gap with the United States in strategic nuclear weapons, the frequency of Soviet political-military operations did tend to increase. A correlation of  $-.42$  was found between the annual ratio of U.S. to USSR force loadings and the annual number of incidents in the third world since 1965.

Continuous series data on Soviet defense expenditures are available only for the period since 1967. Not the value in current or constant currency, but the percentage change in real defense spending was examined. During the decade of 1968 to 1977 these figures ranged from roughly one percent (in 1970) to more than six percent (in 1968). 30/ Again, although no statistically significant correlations were found, the direction of the figures suggested the existence of some very broad association. 31/ No statistical or other relationship could be inferred from correlations between the frequencies of incidents and the rate of growth of the gross national product of the USSR. If the improvement in the strategic balance and increased defense spending did give greater confidence to Soviet leaders and embolden them or give them more to work with, they were not euphorically impelled by upward swings of the economy. Nor can it be said that lesser growth rates bred foreign military adventures as a political outlet for economic disappointment.



Another thought was that the Kremlin might be influenced by fluctuations in U.S. self-confidence, willingness to spend on defense, or the strength of the Presidency. The residual of the Standard and Poor's average annual stock price index--after the separation out of what might be considered the impacts of inflation and real economic growth--was used as a measure of investors' outlook and surrogate for U.S. national spirit. Did Soviet political-military diplomacy occur more frequently when America was "down"? Statistically, the answer is a clear no. Nor was the Kremlin encouraged by declines in U.S. defense spending or deterred by increased U.S. military expenditures, notwithstanding the discounting from annual U.S. defense budgets during the Korean and Vietnam wars the financial costs of those conflicts. 32/ A small but statistically significant  $-.37$  correlation was found, however, between the annual number of incidents in toto and the average annual percentage of those interviewed by the Gallup poll who approved the President's performance--that is, Soviet armed forces were used more often when Americans voiced less approval of the performance by the President. A distinct possibility, of course, is that the lower standing of Presidents in the Gallup poll might have reflected, at least in part, increased Soviet political-military activity. 33/

During the past two decades social scientists have developed a number of sophisticated measures utilizing events data banks for the purpose of forecasting future international behavior including periods of crisis and -favorable relations between nations. One measure developed for the U.S. Department of Defense is a tensor scale of cooperative-conflictive behavior directed by nations at one another which makes use of the World Event Interaction.

Survey (WEIS) data. 34/ An examination of the annual indices of "tension" radiated by the United States toward the Soviet Union and the reverse yielded no associations with the frequency of discrete Soviet political-military operations for the period of 1968-77 for which data were available. Another plausible indicator of forthcoming Soviet political-military diplomacy that was considered was the recognition of crises by Soviet elites. Analysts have compiled a list of 386 international crises, as perceived in the USSR, between 1946 and 1975 on the basis of a search of: Soviet origin chronologies, texts dealing with international events, crisis "management" literature and statements in the United Nations; Communist Party of the Soviet Union congress statements; and the memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev. 35/ It might be thought that the fluctuation in the annual number of crises perceived in the USSR would be reflected in the frequency with which Soviet leaders turned to the armed forces for foreign policy support. This was not the case, however, either for the three decade period examined overall or the post-Khrushchev period considered separately. The Kremlin did not simply respond to some proportion of opportunities and threats as they arose.

What the above adds up to is that the factors examined do not allow a simple linear explanation of Soviet coercive diplomacy; which is not to say that the strategic balance, Soviet defense spending, confidence in the President and other variables that were looked at are unimportant and do not contribute to an explanation. While some variables would seem more important than others, the point is that the relationships, whether complex or general, cannot be viewed in easily quantifiable terms and that a perspective

implicitly based upon such thoughts is almost certainly mistaken. Thus, for example, although it surely did make a difference that an environment of practical strategic parity replaced one of gross Soviet strategic inferiority, it cannot be argued that each small increment of change in this direction led to more frequent Soviet political-military activity. As will be seen in later chapters, what seems to count is the general mind-set of the Soviet leadership which does not manifest its metamorphosis incrementally. <sup>36/</sup> Thus, for example, a statistically significant correlation of  $-.60$  is obtained between Soviet third world actions and a simple three value scaling of years to reflect changes in the gross Soviet strategic position--that is, by allocating a value of three (3) to each of those years when the USSR had no intercontinental nuclear delivery system, a two (2) to years of clear Soviet strategic inferiority, and a one (1) to years since 1969 when the ratio of U.S.:USSR nuclear delivery vehicles dropped below two-to-one. And a  $-.54$  correlation ( $p < .05$ ) is observed between the annual frequency of Soviet political-military diplomacy generally and a simple weighting of years to reflect political transitions in the USSR (by hypothesizing that in the first several years after a Stalin or Khrushchev is replaced the new leadership is not at all adventurous, that in the few years immediately thereafter there is a pendulum swing to the use of force frequently, and that following in turn is a more moderate level of activity falling between those two earlier periods). <sup>37/</sup> These types of association are better discussed in the more traditional terms of the chapters that follow.

Footnotes

1. Philip Windsor and Adam Roberts, Czechoslovakia 1968: Reform, Repression and Resistance (Institute for Strategic Studies, 1970), pp. 28-30.

2. The only expansionary military action turned up in later years was a subtle show of force in 1975 in the form of a missile test in waters of the Barents Sea disputed with Norway.

3. In two incidents, one in September 1950 and the other in January 1951, Soviet troops attempted to seize small pieces of the French and British sectors in West Berlin.

4. Major developments affecting Soviet strategic and conventional military power were, of course, set in motion during that time.

5. Insofar as it sometimes takes a substantial amount of time to uncover the circumstances of non-coercive armed forces activities, it is possible that a number of operations perceived as unstimulated by particular political developments were indeed considered special by Soviet leaders. A ninth coercive action was a step-up in the number of Soviet patrols in West Berlin following a refusal by the United States, Great Britain and France to curtail their patrols in East Berlin.

6. Ship-based ground units may have been used alone or in conjunction with land forces in an additional six incidents, five of which occurred after 1967.

7. Data on U. S. armed forces usage are drawn from Barry M. Blechman and Stephen S. Kaplan, Force Without War: U. S. Armed Forces as a Political Instrument (Brookings, 1978).

8. Ground force size was estimated for 14 percent of the incidents about which force size data were obtained. One-half of the 39 incidents for which data were insufficient to afford estimates concerned actions related to West Berlin.

9. At full strength, a Soviet motorized rifle division musters 12,000 personnel; armored and airborne divisions number 9,500 and 7,000 respectively. Jeffrey Record, Sizing up the Soviet Army (Brookings, 1975), pp. 11-12.

10. Thomas W. Wolfe, Soviet Power and Europe, 1945-1970 (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970), pp. 10-11, 39-40, 164-69; International Institute for Strategic Studies (hereafter IISS), The Military Balance, 1978-1979 (IISS, 1978), p. 9.

11. On the significance of the Roman siege of Masada, see Edward N. Luttwak, The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), pp. 3-4.

12. Data were unavailable on the number of surface combatants used in thirteen incidents, five of which took place before 1967.

13. Robert G. Weinland, "Soviet Naval Operations-Ten Years of Change," professional paper no. 125, (Center for Naval Analyses, August 1974), pp. 1-5.

14. Barry M. Blechman, The Changing Soviet Navy (Brookings, 1973), p. 3.

15. Barry M. Blechman and others, The Soviet Military Buildup in U.S. Defense Spending (Brookings, 1977), p. 11.

16. IISS, The Military Balance, 1978-79 (IISS, 1978), p. 10.
17. A figure is not provided for the activist period beginning in late 1977 because of the paucity of incidents occurring in the third world between 1977 and 1979.
18. Richard E. Neustadt and Graham T. Allison, "Afterword," in Robert F. Kennedy, Thirteen Days: A Memoir of the Cuban Missile Crisis (Norton, 1971), p. 113.
19. Joseph J. Kruzel, "Military Alerts and Diplomatic Signals," Ellen P. Stern, ed., The Limits of Military Intervention (Sage, 1977), p. 89.
20. U. S. armed forces were definitely used in 52 percent of the incidents in which Soviet military power was used coercively and the U.S. was an actor; U.S. forces may have been alerted in an additional 19 percent of these incidents.
21. In January 1978, after the United States refused to abolish or limit its military patrols in East Berlin, the USSR increased its military presence in West Berlin.
22. Data compiled by Robert P. Berman of The Brookings Institution. End-of-year ratio of force loadings: number of nuclear weapons deployed on U.S. and Soviet intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles, and long-range bombers; on U.S. intermediate-range ballistic missiles and bombers when they were deployed in Europe; on U.S. forward deployed aircraft carriers when they were included in plans for

strategic strikes. "Department of Defense Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1979" (1978; processed), and previous reports; "Statement of Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird Before a Joint Session of the Senate Armed Services Committee and the Senate Subcommittee on Department of Defense Appropriations, on the Fiscal Year 1971 Defense Program and Budget" (February 20, 1970; processed), pp. 56-59; "The Development of Strategic Air Command, 1946-1973" (SAC, 1974; processed); Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, World Armaments and Disarmaments: SIPRI Yearbook 1974 (MIT Press, 1974), pp. 105-10; International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance, 1971-1972 (London: IISS, 1971), p. 56; Norman Polmar, Aircraft Carriers (Doubleday, 1969), pp. 503-08, 596-600.

23. Data provided by the Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Strategic Research (for Soviet defense spending) and Office of Economic Research (for Soviet gross national product). GNP growth figures were derived from calculations of factor cost prices in 1970 rubles. Continuous series data were available for the period since 1951 for Soviet GNP and since 1967 for Soviet defense spending.

24. Standard and Poor's Trade and Securities Statistics, 1976 Edition (Standard and Poor's, 1976), p. 4, and updated material; Economic Report of the President, transmitted to the Congress January 1978 (GPO, 1978), p. 257. An index of national confidence was constructed by dividing the 1946 U.S. gross national product by the current year gross national product and multiplying by the Standard and Poor's index figure for the current year.

25. George H. Gallup, ed., The Gallup Poll, vols. 1-3 (Random House, 1972); The Gallup Opinion Index, report nos. 56 (February 1970), 138 (January 1977), and 165 (April 1979).

26. Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), "National Defense Budget Estimates for FY 1977" (OASD-Comptroller, 1976), p. 95, and later editions.

27. Data collected and scored by Early Warning and Monitoring Project, International Public Policy Research Corporation (McLean, Va.); based on a method presented by Judith Ayres Daly and Thomas R. Davies, in The Early Warning and Monitoring System: A Progress Report (McLean, Va.: Decisions and Designs, Inc., July 1978), pp. 70-104. Data available for years since 1966.

28. As presented by Robert B. Mahoney, Jr. and Richard P. Clayberg, in Analysis of the Soviet Crisis Management Experience: Technical Report (Arlington, Va.: CACI, September 1978), pp. 3-1 to 3-43.

29. Using .95 as the level of confidence required for rejecting the null hypothesis.

30. See footnote 23.

31. For all incidents annually,  $r = .42$ ; and for those actions geared to the direct expansion or defense of communism abroad,  $r = .59$ .

32. Figures on the costs of the Korean and Vietnam wars were obtained from the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), Program/Budget Division.



33. To disentangle this knot completely requires an examination of the timing sequence of Soviet actions and changes in the rating of the President and the separation out from the latter of the effects of other influential events in the interim between polls. Of further interest, perhaps,  $r = -.39$  for 1965-77;  $p > .05$ .

34. See footnote 27.

35. Mahoney and Clayberg, Analysis of the Soviet Crisis Management Experience, pp. 2-15 to 2-27.

36. Readers might want to note that simple leads and lags of variables that were done in supplementary calculations yielded no fruitful results.

37. With this in mind, the following scores were awarded: For the years 1946-52, two; for 1953-55, three; for 1956-58, one; for 1959-64, two; for 1965-67, three; for 1968-70, one; for 1971 onwards, two.

## Chapter 3

### EXPANSION AND DEFENSE OF COMMUNISM

Leon Trotsky did not believe communism in Russia could survive without revolution elsewhere in Europe. By the mid-1920s, though, the dominant line was Stalin's belief that "socialism in one country" was possible--that is, the Soviet Union could make it on its own.

Until the incorporation of territories to the west between 1939 and 1941, the spread of communism abroad remained, with one exception, a distant goal. The exception was Outer Mongolia where the USSR gained dominion beginning in 1921 when, at the end of the Russian Civil War, Red Army troops and a Mongol force, together numbering about 13,000, defeated a White Russian army in the area near Kiakhta. Soviet troops then remained in Outer Mongolia until at least 1925 to support the consolidation of power by a new People's Revolutionary Government. Soviet military men developed the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Army in their image and continued to serve this new Red Army--as it was renamed in 1930--as advisers and staff officers. 1/ In 1932 and 1934 Soviet troops helped suppress internal rebellions against the Mongolian People's Republic--precedents for interventions in Eastern Europe in later years.

Red military men were unable to extend the boundaries of communism in the west during the Civil War years: In the winter of 1917-18 White Finns fought Red Finns supported by Bolshevik troops and the Baltic Fleet over the future of Finland. From their island fortress of Sveaborg

and their ships near the shore of the Finnish capital, Red sailors dominated Helsinki until they were immobilized by ice and then forced to withdraw by advancing German forces. Nor was Lenin unwilling to take advantage of a revolt against the Shah of Iran in 1920. Supporting the insurgents were Bolshevik soldiers and naval vessels, and a Soviet Republic of Gilan was even established in northern Iran. A retreat was sounded only when it became clear that a very large Soviet intervention was necessary to obtain success. Major battle by the Red Army in the west was afforded only in the case of Poland where Red army men wheeled as far as the gates of Warsaw before they were driven back by forces led by Josef Pilsudski. Before the Bolshevik troops were forced to retreat a Polish Provisional Revolutionary Committee was briefly established in Bialystock. 2/

After Adolph Hitler became chancellor in Germany the Red Army was increased in size from a decade long strength of 561,000 to 540,000; by 1936 1.3 million Soviet citizens were in arms. However, when Hitler occupied himself with Spain, Austria, and Czechoslovakia during the next several years, Stalin carried out a massive purge of the Soviet armed forces. Only after Hitler turned east after seizing the western half of Czechoslovakia did Stalin become seriously concerned about war. 3/ Thus on August 23, 1939 German foreign minister Joachim von Ribbentrop and his Soviet counterpart Vyacheslav M. Molotov put their signatures to the Treaty of Non-Aggression Between Germany and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. In making this pact, Hitler insured that the invasion of Poland, beginning on September 1, would lead to war only with Britain and

France, and not also with Russia. Stalin sought for Germany's energies to be spent in the west and to gain time for the USSR to strengthen itself further. A "Secret Additional Protocol" to the alliance offered the following material incentives:

1. In the event of a territorial and political rearrangement of the areas belonging to the Baltic states (Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) the northern boundary of Lithuania shall represent the boundary of the spheres of influence of Germany and the USSR....
2. In the event of a territorial and political rearrangement of the areas belonging to the Polish state the spheres of influence of Germany and the USSR shall be bounded approximately by the line of the rivers Narew, Vistula, and San. The question of whether the interests of both parties make desirable the maintenance of an independent Polish state...can only be definitely determined in the course of further political developments...
3. With regard to Southeastern Europe attention is called by the Soviet side to its interest in Bessarabia...4/

On September 17, 1939, while the Polish armed forces were being destroyed by the Nazi onslaught from the west, the Red Army crossed the Polish frontier on a broad front extending from Latvia to Rumania. Pre-  
saging the Soviet Manchurian campaign in 1945, the occupation of eastern Poland was accomplished within days. A further secret agreement between Berlin and Moscow on September 28 traded Lublin Province in eastern Poland to Germany in return for the cession of Lithuania to the Soviet sphere, whereupon Moscow forced "mutual trade and aid agreements" upon Estonia (September 29), Latvia (October 5) and Lithuania (October 10). What was of great importance for Moscow, the agreements allowed the establishment of Soviet military bases in these nations, undermining completely their ability to resist formal annexation to the USSR less than a year later. 5/

Finland's turn was next; but Helsinki was not bullied by Soviet diplomacy, including Moscow's threat to use force. Finally on November 29, 1939 the USSR declared war on its northern neighbor which, after an heroic defense, making for a very poor showing by the Red Army, was forced to end its resistance in March 1940. The terms of surrender included the cession of Finnish territory adjacent to Lake Ladoga near Leningrad, Hangö, and large tracts along the central and northern portions of Finland's border with the USSR. 6/

Moscow's adherence to the secret protocol of the Nazi-Soviet Pact was made complete when following an ultimatum given on June 23, 1940, Rumania offered up Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina to occupation by the Red Army. This Rumanian coda and the incorporation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania into the USSR just days earlier were precipitated by the unexpectedly quick fall of France.

The principal objective of these actions was to improve the USSR's strategic position vis-à-vis Germany. The territorial gains following the Nazi-Soviet pact allowed the Red Army to stand roughly one hundred miles further west in Europe, improved enormously the Soviet position in the Baltic and Gulf of Finland, and advanced the frontier away from Leningrad. Notwithstanding the wisdom of the agreement, which allowed Hitler to face west and east sequentially rather than at the same time, the tactics of Soviet political-military action in advancing the USSR's position were keen. Significantly, the one bump in the road occurred when Moscow turned to its armed forces not for influence, but as an instrument of force—that is, in the Winter War with Finland.

### Gains After the Second World War

Immediately after World War II Soviet geopolitical influence was increased dramatically. The Red Army played a major role in this development by occupying Poland, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, eastern Germany and northern Korea, and by standing behind local communists in Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. Moscow seized upon the circumstances in which the war ended to establish across the USSR's frontiers communist regimes satisfying both ideological and statist objectives.

Stalin was not inflexible in his utilization of Soviet military power and did not have the Red Army stand fast to support local communists in all circumstances: withdrawals were made from China, Iran, and Czechoslovakia; a communist regime was not established in Austria; and no coup of the Czechoslovakian genre or of any other type was attempted in Finland. Stalin was also willing to back off after probing for weaknesses in Turkey.

#### Eastern Europe

The opportunity for the expansion of Soviet influence arose beginning in January 1944 when the Red Army crossed the prewar German-Russian border, that is, the 1939 Nazi-Soviet pact partition line in Poland. In early April 1944 Soviet troops entered Rumania, thereafter overwhelmed Bulgaria, and surged into Yugoslavia. Then with its flanks covered, the Red Army began its great march westward through Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland, into Austria and finally Germany and Berlin.

As sanctioned by the Yalta and Potsdam conferences and a treaty with Warsaw signed in August 1945, the USSR acquired from Poland the three provinces east of the Curzon line. Finland was again forced to offer up the territories lost during the Winter War and was made to lease

to the USSR for 50 years the naval base of Porkkala-Hdd on the Gulf of Finland. Rumania was forced to cede Northern Bukovina and Bessarabia to Soviet sovereignty, while from Czechoslovakia the USSR obtained Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia. Germany's loss to the Soviet Union was East Prussia. In short, aside from the Baltic states, which were formally incorporated into the USSR in 1940, the essence of Moscow's other gains in 1939-40 were legitimized after the Second World War by agreements signed by Allied or former Axis nations.

Critical to these cessions was the occupation of the territories in question by massive Soviet military formations. To some extent the agreements reached with the USSR recognized what were taken by many as legitimate Soviet demands for reparations and insurance of the USSR's future security. But notwithstanding sympathy for both the Soviet Union's suffering during the war and interest in a more forward position in Eastern Europe, these warrants were signed, more than anything else, as acknowledgements of Soviet military power and as a form of damage limitation. Not to have come to terms such as these risked infuriating Stalin from a position of weakness and raised the possibility of the Kremlin opening its mouth even wider.

The agreements at Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam all supported the establishment of postwar regimes in Eastern Europe "democratic and friendly" to the USSR. 7/ Stalin's concern was the latter, although he diligently established "people's democracies" in the occupied nations, which were joined by Czechoslovakia in February 1948. Of no small significance to the successful finale of the Czech drama, if not a necessary condition, was the massing and maneuvers by the Red Army just across

Czechoslovakia's borders. Although the Czech communists did hold or control the most important positions of government and even obtained the support of the army chief-of-staff, this authority and support may be importantly attributed to sensitivities about contiguous Soviet military power. 8/

The guarantor of sovietization in Eastern Europe and purges of Eastern European communists whom Moscow did not consider loyal enough in the late 1940s was the continued deployment of the Red Army in these nations. One-half to one million Soviet troops remained in Eastern Europe after the war. Group Soviet Forces Germany included 22 divisions and supporting tactical aircraft. Up to eight divisions and supporting aircraft were emplaced in Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Rumania. And behind these formations were the 50-60 divisions in the western military districts of the USSR. By way of contrast, the United States, Great Britain and France so reduced their forces that together they maintained only ten divisions in Western Europe prior to the Korean War. United States troops in the region numbered approximately one-hundred thousand and worldwide totalled only 1.5 million. 9/

#### The Balkans

The usage of Soviet military power in the Balkans presents an interesting contrast to the pattern followed in Eastern Europe proper. The Red Army found its way into Yugoslavia only for a brief moment. In 1944-45 Stalin felt the existence of strong ties with and, no doubt, the ability to dominate the Yugoslav communists who, as a result of their leading role in the partisan movement, were domestically well rooted and able to gain quick control in the wake of the German army's retreat before the Russian legions.



Hence the Red Army was not diverted to the occupation of Yugoslavia after the liberation of Belgrade, but was directed out of the country to obtain the liberation and occupation of other prizes. 10/ Stalin was correct about the ability of the Yugoslav communists to consolidate their position without the direct help of Soviet military power, but was terribly mistaken about Tito's and his colleagues' willingness to accept the USSR's leading role in decisions affecting Yugoslavia.

Albania was completely bypassed by the Red Army. Moreover, between the ouster of the Nazis and the break with Tito in 1948, Moscow considered Albania within Yugoslavia's sphere of influence. It was at least half expected that Belgrade would actually incorporate the country as Moscow had the Baltic states earlier. Milovan Djilas has reported that Stalin suggested this as late as January 1948 at a Kremlin meeting. 11/ At a February 1948 meeting in Moscow Stalin expressed a different view, however, and opposed vigorously Belgrade's deployment of an air force fighter regiment and plans to dispatch two divisions to Albania. (The issue, though, was Yugoslavia's exhibition of foreign policy independence, not Albanian sovereignty.) 12/

Beginning in July 1948, Tirana used the crisis in Soviet-Yugoslav relations that had erupted in March to denounce Belgrade's influence in Albania. Yugoslav economic, military, and other missions were forced to withdraw, and various bilateral agreements were terminated. As replacements, Soviet military and other missions were sought, Albania's objective being to obtain the USSR as a guarantor of its independence. 13/ Stalin meant to increase Soviet influence in Albania and isolate Belgrade.

Thus Russian arms, equipment and advisers poured in and the Albanian armed forces were remodeled in the Soviet image. 14/

As in Yugoslavia and Albania, the Bulgarian Communist Party too enjoyed a degree of popularity; and unlike in Poland, Hungary, Rumania and what became East Germany, there was no reason for concern about nationalist, anti-Russian sentiments. Rather the opposite was true; which is not to say that purges and more brutal means of eliminating opposition were not necessary before local communist control was consolidated. 15/ This accomplished, though, Soviet military units were withdrawn from Bulgaria in December 1947. 16/ Moscow has had no reason to regret this withdrawal, unlike that from Rumania in 1958. The Bulgarian Communist Party remained the most loyal ruling communist party in the world.

#### Korea

As long as the Great Patriotic War lasted in Europe, Stalin was pleased to abide by the terms of the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact signed in Moscow on April 13, 1941. On April 4, 1945, with the end of the war in Europe in clear sight, Stalin denounced the pact, and during the next four months 39 Soviet divisions were redeployed to the Far East, doubling the Red Army's size in that theater to about 1.6 million men. On August 9, 1945, three days after Hiroshima, but also three months to the day after VE-Day as Stalin promised at Yalta, a massive Soviet offensive was mounted against Japanese forces in Manchuria and Korea. 17/

Making the most of their careful preparations, overwhelming superiority and the weakened state of the enemy, Soviet armed forces occupied in

approximately eleven days all of Manchuria, Korea south to the 38th parallel, and the southern part of Sakhalin Island. 18/ Only in part can this offensive be related to the objective of insuring the defeat of Japan, for it also afforded the USSR influence over the political future of East Asia. Moscow used the opportunity to attempt the establishment of communist regimes in Korea and China and to improve its long-term security position.

Soviet troops occupied northern Korea in accordance with prior Allied agreement. Unlike in China, however, where Moscow sought only to strengthen the position of the local communists, Soviet military power in Korea was utilized to guarantee the establishment of a full-fledged communist regime under the leadership of Kim Il-sung. Like a number of others who formed the leadership of what eventually became the Korean Workers Party, Kim had earlier fought with the Red Army in Europe and entered Korea in the uniform of a Soviet officer. 19/

The full establishment of a communist regime in Korea was accomplished in stages in a time context not too dissimilar from the concurrent political change being shepherded in in Eastern Europe. Notwithstanding the facade of a coalition government by Korean nationalists and communists, real power rested with Soviet authorities who used the occupation to confirm control by Kim and his associates. In 1946 the formation of a new socio-economic order got underway, and in 1947 a communist-dominated North Korean People's Assembly was elected. A constitution was ratified in July 1948 and in September the formation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was formally announced. With this final step accomplished Moscow felt confident enough to terminate the Red Army presence in North Korea.

The withdrawal was completed in late 1948. 20/ Also by this time, the Nationalists had been driven out of Manchuria, and Chiang Kai-shek's forces had begun to crumble. Thus the regime created in Pyongyang represented not a thin geostrategic extension of Soviet influence, but a buffer to Chinese and Soviet security in Northeast Asia.

#### Withdrawals and Failures

Moscow also sought to use its military power in China and Iran after the war to establish regimes sharing Marxist-Leninist ideals, supportive of Soviet state interests, and amenable to Moscow's direction. As in Germany and Korea, the Red Army occupied substantial portions of China and Iran and supported local communist parties. In the end, though, the Red Army withdrew from these countries without communist regimes able to stand on their own having been established.

In Manchuria the Soviet military command under Marshal R. Ya Malinovsky began to support the communists almost immediately upon the termination of hostilities, notwithstanding the Treaty of Friendship and Alliance Between the Republic of China (the Nationalists) and the USSR signed on August 14, 1945. Within three months more than 200,000 Chinese communist troops had been infiltrated into the area. Of further importance was the handing over of captured Japanese arms to these forces and their being allowed to recruit among ex-Manchukuo army personnel and enlist as local police. Chinese Communist Party organizational efforts also were facilitated.

On the other hand, uncertainty that the Chinese communists would triumph led Moscow to allow Nationalist troops to be airlifted to Manchuria in November 1945. At the same time an attempt was made to wrest long-term

economic concessions from the Chiang Kai-shek government; as in Germany, a massive amount of industry in Manchuria was stripped. That the Nationalists were allowed to gain control over south-central Manchuria prior to the Soviet withdrawal, finally achieved in April 1946, and the fact of the withdrawal itself seems to have been linked to the landing of more than 100,000 U.S. troops in northern China and Soviet concern that the United States might become more directly involved in deciding the future of China than it had been up until then. With the situation in China fluid and a communist triumph uncertain, Moscow seems to have concluded that a favorable outcome was more likely in the absence of Soviet and U.S. forces (which too were withdrawn) than otherwise.

Aside from the role Stalin imagined U.S. armed forces might otherwise play, there was also to be considered the security of the Soviet naval base at Port Arthur and special rights in Dairen, obtained formally in the Yalta agreement and further sanctified in the aforementioned treaty with the Nationalists. (A further Yalta and Chinese concession to the USSR was the restoration of joint ownership of the Manchurian Railway.) In late 1945 and early 1946 U.S. aircraft flew quite near and in some instances over these Soviet positions and in early March 1946, just prior to the Soviet withdrawal, these positions were reinforced and overflying U.S. military aircraft were fired upon. 21/

Further toward an explanation of the Soviet military withdrawal from Manchuria in the midst of ongoing conflict in China, Moscow's relationship with the Maoist forces was not especially close. For one thing, the Maoist forces owed Moscow little in terms of past support, going back to the 1920s; also, the ideological distance between the two was not small. Not

surprisingly, the Soviets sought at various junctures to give advantage to the more loyal communist group led by Li Li-shan. 22/ After the Soviet withdrawal the Kremlin afforded Mao little military support during the Chinese Civil War, going only so far as to occupy in 1947 Haiyang Island, which the USSR may have wanted to hold onto itself, and to harass Chinese nationalist aircraft at the very end of the war--after it was clear that the United States would not militarily oppose a communist triumph in China. 23/

At almost precisely the same time that the 300,000 Soviet troops occupying Manchuria were withdrawn in April 1946 Moscow recalled its force of 60,000 troops emplaced in northern Iran. The Red Army entered Iran originally in 1941 in joint agreement with Britain to safeguard the oil fields and ensure the security of the southern supply route to the USSR. Moscow also used the opportunity to create the communist led Tudeh Party and to establish, in December 1945, an Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan and a Kurdish People's Republic. Soviet intentions were thus blatant. What was equally clear, Moscow did not intend to recall the Red Army in accordance with the agreement made at Teheran in 1943 until these structures were made firm. Indeed, in October 1945, fresh Soviet forces were sent into Azerbaijan and in November Iranian troops in Tabriz were given the choice--really an ultimatum--of either moving south or joining a new Azerbaijani army. When an Iranian relief force then moved toward Tabriz, it was halted by Red Army units. 24/ That Stalin was willing to back off in Iran only a few months later seems to have been heavily related to the sudden and strong interest taken by the United States in the interim. As President Truman saw it, "the Soviet Union persisted in

its occupation until I personally saw to it that Stalin was informed that I had given orders to our military chiefs to prepare for the movement of our ground, sea and air forces. Stalin then did what I knew he would do. He moved his troops out." 25/

Taken together, the decisions not to have Soviet troops stand fast in either China or Iran appear to have been occasioned by (1) a concern to limit the level of U.S. hostility to the USSR while Eastern Europe was being secured; and (2) an unwillingness to risk Soviet prestige or security in crises with the United States over these territories. In the wake of the Red Army's departure from Azerbaijan, Iranian troops quickly terminated communist control in the area and carried out a program of tough repression. No doubt, Stalin understood this.

A third event in what in retrospect was a retrenchment by Moscow of its position in Asia while power was being consolidated in Eastern Europe was the failure to take forceful action to obtain the cession of territory from Turkey and joint control of the Dardanelles. On the basis of the 1939 Nazi-Soviet Pact, the allies' agreements at Yalta and Potsdam, the Soviet-Chinese treaty of 1945, and the postwar peace treaties, the USSR expanded to include the Baltic states, the eastern half of prewar Poland, chunks of Finland, Rumania and Czechoslovakia, the southern half of Sakhalin Island and Kurile Islands, naval bases in Porkalla and Port Arthur, special rights in Dairen and joint control of the Manchurian Railway. Considering these concessions, the fact that Turkey was not supportive of Soviet interests during the war, and the weakness of Britain and until then disinterest by the United States, it is not surprising that in 1945 Moscow called upon Ankara to give up the provinces of Kars and Ardahan

and allow the USSR a naval base in the area of the Straits. The two provinces, moreover, had been part of Russia at one time in the past. 26/

In support of these demands Moscow concentrated large numbers of troops along with armor and aircraft on the Bulgarian and Iranian frontiers with Turkey in early and mid-March 1946; at the same time Moscow was announcing its retention of Soviet military units in Iran. 27/ Also as in the case of Iran, though, Moscow backed off by April--on the 5th of which the U.S.S. Missouri docked in the harbor of Istanbul in a symbolic show of U.S. military power and interest in Turkey. 28/ Stalin clearly was not interested in a serious crisis with the United States over the Soviet position in Southwest Asia.

#### Preserving the Communist Community

Soviet leaders have always pictured the USSR as the first state and beacon of the communist world. For their part, the other members of this community have been pleased to make claim to Moscow's succor and to allow the Kremlin to feel responsible for their security.

Until at least 1965, though, what Soviet leaders said about their commitment to the security of other communist nations was not a good means for predicting Kremlin behavior. Between the end of the Second World War and the mid-1950s Soviet leaders probably understated their degree of commitment to Eastern Europe, while in the next decade, into the Vietnam War, Moscow's willingness to militarily support communist regimes outside of Eastern Europe was overstated. Whatever the rhetoric, though, the use of Soviet military units to support fraternal nations has always been prudent where the risk of conflict with the United States has



existed. Rhetoric and military action have been in greater concordance since 1965 when Khrushchev's successors had to respond to the United States' initiation of the air war against North Vietnam.

### The Special Importance of Eastern Europe

Between 1943 and 1948 Moscow signed treaties of friendship and mutual aid with the various nations of Eastern Europe. The Soviet security commitments in these agreements, though, were directed at future aggression by Germany which, in the immediate postwar context, was a divided and occupied nation. <sup>29/</sup> Soviet statements after the Second World War avoided military commitments to the new communist regimes in Eastern Europe. Marshal Konev, for example, related on Armed Forces Day 1951: "the Soviet Armed Forces reliably protect the peace which has been won, the sacred frontiers of our motherland, and the state interests of the USSR." <sup>30/</sup> The term "state interests" might caution those who would upset arrangements of concern to the Kremlin; but this vagary did not postulate a commitment to anything in particular.

Stalin might have withdrawn from all or some of the occupied Eastern European nations if, for example, one year after the war the United States had threatened to use nuclear weapons against the USSR. In light of the U.S. demobilization by then, no such demand would have been credible in the absence of a nuclear threat; nor would any Western conventional military probe or other action toward this end have been successful. Soviet military power in Europe was probably adequate to the task of conventional defense in 1945; it surely was in 1946.

Actually U.S. demobilization and domestic political circumstances made it impossible for the Truman Administration to contemplate threatening war

against the USSR except upon severe provocation by Moscow in a region not considered a part of the Soviet sphere--for example, Western Europe or perhaps the Middle East. Excepting the Berlin blockade, Stalin did not offer such provocation and Soviet statements of commitment to the nascent communist regimes in Eastern Europe were restrained. Meanwhile the Red Army, by its size and deployment in the region, was an effective guarantor of Soviet hegemony in any circumstance other than the threat of nuclear war. Not sufficient by itself, rhetoric to this effect was not necessary.

Such statement was afforded with less risk upon Soviet acquisition of an Intermediate and then intercontinental nuclear weapons delivery capability. It was also more in keeping with the personality of Nikita Khrushchev. The commitment by the USSR expressed in the Treaty of Warsaw signed in 1955 was not gratuitous, however, being motivated in large part by the United States' decision to rearm West Germany. Moscow was not alone in its concern that a rearmed Federal Republic might in time act aggressively to upset the de facto postwar settlements in Central and Eastern Europe; Europeans generally were anxious about this development. Eastern Europeans were appreciative of article four of the Treaty of Warsaw which declared:

In the event of armed attack in Europe on one or more of the parties to the Treaty by any state or group of states, each of the Parties to the Treaty ..shall immediately... come to the assistance of the state or states attacked with all such means as it deems necessary, including armed force....

The treaty and the organization it established served other Soviet interests: 31/

The Red Army's continued deployment in Eastern Europe was legitimized, a matter of immediate importance insofar as the basis for the presence of

Soviet military men in Rumania and Hungary was the USSR's occupation of Austria. It was not coincidental that Moscow was willing to formally conclude the Austrian State Treaty only on May 15, 1955, the day after the Treaty of Warsaw was signed. The latter also reinforced the perception of the USSR and nations of Eastern Europe as a bloc and provided an institutional means for the USSR to transmit lines of policy to bloc members. Of further value, the Warsaw Treaty Organization(WTO) sanctioned the integration of its signatories' armed forces under the unified command of Soviet officers. Soviet military leaders have since worked hard to use the WTO as an instrument to dispose Eastern European military men favorably to the USSR. 32/

#### Intervention in Eastern Europe

Of course, the purpose of Soviet military power in Eastern Europe goes beyond interest in forward defense of the USSR and guaranteeing the sovereignty of these nations. The West, for its part, has never seriously probed the USSR's position in the region; the only manifest use of Soviet military power in response to unprovoked Western military action during the past third of a century has been to attack and shoot down single NATO aircraft intruding into Eastern European airspace. Making the record complete are those reports in 1951 of several dozen Soviet aircraft being sent to Albania to help intercept planes carrying emigre guerrillas and leaflets. 33/

The continued forward deployment of the Red Army has also guaranteed the existence of communist regimes in Eastern Europe and their allegiance to the USSR. Large-size Soviet armed forces have been called upon on a

number of occasions to respond to undesirable political developments in the region. The degree to which Moscow has been willing to go in using military power to suppress political change in Eastern Europe would appear related to three concerns: 1) the continued existence of a Marxist-Leninist regime of unquestioned authority; 2) the danger of the dissident state leaving the WTO, and of its joining the Western alliance; and 3) the degree of expected resistance to the use of Soviet armed forces. Mere disloyalty by communist regimes in Eastern Europe has not been enough to bring about violent Soviet military action. Thus the Red Army forcefully intervened in East Germany in 1953, in Hungary in 1956, and in Czechoslovakia in 1968. But Moscow went only so far as shows of force when it responded in 1949, 1951 and, it would appear, again in 1974 to Yugoslavia's independent course; in 1956 to the Poznan demonstrations and Poland's "October," and to the 1970 demonstrations in Poland; and in 1968 and 1971 to Rumania's heterodoxy.

#### Insurrections in the Street

In late May 1953, three months after Stalin's death, the East German government raised production norms in a number of industries to improve economic efficiency. East Berlin workers responded angrily and on June 16 staged large demonstrations. Quickly the fervor in the streets led to verbal and physical attacks on communist officials, the hauling down of the red flag from public buildings, and a siege of the government. The next day three Soviet mechanized divisions sealed off the city, seized key points within it and systematically ended the insurrection by force of arms, killing or wounding perhaps a thousand people. 34/ Similar scenes were repeated in Magdeberg, Leipzig, Dresden and other East German

cities to which news of the East Berlin insurrection had spread. We may surmise that Walter Ulbricht's East German regime was as mortified by these events as Moscow.

If a loyal communist regime was to continue to exist in East Germany, the only answer was Soviet military power. Not until 1952 did the USSR decide to create a real East German army out of the Garrisoned People's Police, which in May 1953 numbered about 100,000. The transition to a regular army had not been completed when the June riots erupted. Moreover, the performance of these units on the first day of the uprising was mixed; they could not have been depended upon to suppress the rebellion. 35/ Finally, while Moscow pictured the Red Army in the GDR as a guest come to protect East Germany against Western aggression, the USSR and not the Ulbricht regime held legal rights in Berlin which theoretically remained under four power control. In the event of a sizable disturbance in West Berlin, although not in West German cities, the Western allies almost certainly would have turned to their military power at hand to restore order.

Moscow responded to popular demonstrations in Poland in 1956 and in 1970 quite differently. In late June 1956, after a delegation from a large Poznan engineering enterprise failed to obtain satisfactory concessions on wages and benefits from the government, the factory workers called a strike and took to the streets where they were joined by large numbers of other citizens. In short order the protest turned into something of an uprising against the regime. A prison was opened, the headquarters of the security forces was attacked, and along with slogans such as 'we want bread' were heard chants of 'down with the Soviet occupation', 'down with

Communism' and 'down with dictatorship'. 36/ Warsaw and other Polish cities remained quiet, however, and no sense of siege existed. The Polish regime, led by Edward Ochab and Josef Cyrankiewicz, responded by having Polish armored units do what Soviet tanks and troops had done three years earlier in East Germany, though it meant killing or wounding several hundred Poles by the time the turmoil was quelled and the streets were made clear. The effectiveness of Warsaw's response obviated any need for Moscow to order Soviet military units to openly intervene. The only role of the Red Army in these events was thus limited to patrolling the Polish-East German border to apprehend demonstrators seeking escape through the GDR to the West.

A decade and a half later a government economic decision was again responsible for setting off violent unrest in Poland. Just before Christmas the Gomulka regime made known a broad range of 1970 price increases that were expected to add 20 percent to the average family food bill as well as major boosts to the costs of fuel and clothing. Notwithstanding the announcement at the same time of price reductions for household and other consumer goods and a new bonus system, the next day--December 14, 1970--rioting broke out in Gdansk and spread to nearby towns in the Baltic area. The Communist party and other public buildings and a Soviet merchant ship were set afire, political authorities were attacked, and barricades were built; and in other major Polish cities workers forced industrial slowdowns and engaged in other forms of demonstration. 37/

Though embarrassed and forced to retreat on its economic pronouncements, the leadership in Warsaw responded firmly to restore order. Two Polish divisions were deployed north and together with large police formations suppressed the disturbances forcefully, causing hundreds of casualties.

A Danish journalist saw the 'brutality at least as great as that used by the Nazi militia in Copenhagen during the war'. 38/ If Moscow did not like this citizen outburst, it again had no cause to doubt Warsaw's overall control and intent and competence to restore local authority. As in 1956, Red Army units acted only to seal off Poland's western border. As a matter of further precaution, it also appears that Soviet military units in East Germany were moved north toward the Baltic area. It is also possible that in response to the turmoil in Poland in both 1956 and 1970 sizable Soviet military units elsewhere in Eastern Europe or the USSR were placed on alert for possible deployment.

In each of these three cases of popular outburst, the local communist regime perceived the situation at hand as a threat to its authority and was willing to support or itself followed a course of action satisfying Soviet interests. What brought about manifest Soviet intervention in East Germany in 1953 but not in Poland in June 1956 or 1970 was, most essentially, the GDR government's inability to itself rapidly restore control. In this circumstance, the massive and ready Soviet military presence in East Germany, the importance of Germany to the USSR and Soviet legal jurisdiction in East Berlin meant an extremely low threshold to intervention.

#### Assertions of Independence

Quite different circumstances were presented to the Kremlin by Yugoslavia in the late 1940s, Poland and Hungary in the fall of 1956, and in later years by Rumania, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia again. Threats and military demonstrations were the Kremlin's reactions to those developments in Yugoslavia, Poland and Rumania, while for Hungary and Czechoslovakia military suppression was the end result. Why this difference when in each of these instances the USSR was faced

by a disobedient government? Perspectives of security and ideology would have provided as much justification for interventions to terminate Yugoslavia's independent course, Poland's "October," or Rumania's heterodoxy as for those actions in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. What then explains the USSR's differing behavior? Aside from idiosyncratic factors, the keys again appear to be local regime control over its populace and the course of domestic events; the degree of regime adherence to Marxist-Leninist political precepts and retention of formal alliance with the USSR; and the capacity and will of the regime to resist Soviet intervention by force. Regarding the last point Christopher Jones has argued the case in the following terms:

An East European Communist who has obtained control of his party and his country by taking a stand as both a nationalist and socialist can deter a Soviet military intervention if he makes three things clear to Moscow: (1) his army and people will go to war in defense of their national sovereignty; (2) the party members who collaborate with the Soviets will be charged with treason; (3) the East European Communists under attack will continue their resistance underground or in exile. 39/

#### Yugoslavia: The One That Got Away

In June 1948, after exchanging harsh polemics for months, the Soviet controlled Communist Information Bureau (Cominform) finally expelled the "Tito clique" from the bloc and world communist movement. At the same time, Bulgaria and Albania began to provoke border incidents with Yugoslavia, apparently to intimidate Belgrade and exhaust its defense forces. Withstanding this pressure, Yugoslavia was subjected in August-November 1949 to what seemed an ultimatum signed by V. Molotov



and the presence on its borders of up to nine Soviet divisions. These forces were supplemented by Rumanian and Bulgarian (and perhaps Hungarian) military formations. 40/

Yugoslavia's original sin lay in its unwillingness to accept Soviet dictation of its domestic affairs and intra-bloc behavior. What appears to have prompted Moscow's show of force in 1949 was Belgrade's request for a U.S. Export-Import Bank credit. President Truman acceded to this request in August and in September a loan of \$20 million was announced. Further loans were arranged in October from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development).

Nevertheless, Stalin could have had little doubt that Tito was a committed communist or that he and his colleagues intended to maintain a "dictatorship of the proletariat." Indeed, Yugoslavia had, in Zbigniew Brzezinski's words, "the most orthodox, the most Stalinist, the most Soviet type of regime in East Europe." 41/ Tito persecuted non-Communists as well as Cominform communists.

Previously Belgrade had been at the forefront within the bloc denouncing imperialism and taking hostile initiatives even against the United States--as when it shot at and forced down two U.S. aircraft, threatened to seize Trieste by force, and held trials in which those in the dock were accused of being imperialist agents. Moscow could also understand that it had driven Yugoslavia into economic relations with the West.

The Yugoslav comrades, though, unlike other orthodox communists in Eastern Europe, were home grown and had good rapport with the populace.

As a result of his wartime leadership, Tito himself was an immensely popular figure. He also appeared to have the means and intent to resist Soviet intervention, first by organized combat in the field and thereafter by guerrilla warfare, such as the German army was subjected to during World War II. Stalin was not willing to incur the cost of major fighting and casualties, the prospect of serious long-term resistance, and the risk of the United States airlifting military aid to Yugoslavs. The West had just recently defeated the Berlin blockade and in April 1949 the North Atlantic Treaty had been signed. As U.S. diplomats reported, Stalin was prepared only for a "war of nerves." 42/

A new threat appeared directed at Yugoslavia in September 1951 when Soviet bombers painted with Yugoslav markings massed near its borders. 43/ This action was probably in response to recent high level visits exchanged by Washington and Belgrade--including the Yugoslav chief-of-staff and U.S. Mutual Security administrator Averell Harriman--and the beginning of U.S. military assistance to Yugoslavia. Insofar as the Red Army was not at this time concentrated on Yugoslavia's borders, no Soviet threat to actually invade was detectable.

It is of further interest that a quarter of a century and several cycles of Soviet-Yugoslav relations later, large-scale Soviet and Hungarian troop movements were reported close to Yugoslavia's border with Hungary in September 1974, apparently as a caution to Belgrade which then had on trial a group of alleged "Cominformists" (pro-Soviet communists). 44/ Tito could infer from this circumstance a warning by the Kremlin that an anti-Soviet campaign in Yugoslavia would lead to dangerous tension between the two nations, something highly undesirable to the aged marshal

who had to contemplate what circumstances might lower the likelihood to Soviet intervention following his death. Belgrade thereafter sought to smooth out its relations with Moscow and its Eastern European neighbors and to dispel the image of confrontation that had developed. 45/

#### Poland's "October" and the Hungarian Revolution

As the road to and from Germany, and as its immediate neighbor to the west, important political developments in Poland have always been of great significance to the USSR. So the Kremlin was horrified in October 1956 on learning that it was the intent of a majority of the Polish communist party (Polish United Workers Party) politburo to politically resurrect Wladyslaw Gomulka and oust the Stalinist hard-line and pro-Soviet minority members--the so-called Natolinist faction, including Polish defense minister and military commander Konstantin Rokossovsky, a Soviet marshal of Polish ancestry. Gomulka, who had been a victim of Stalin's purges in the late 1940s and who had languished in prison as a result of his championing national communism in the late 1940s was to be elected to the Polish Politburo and First Secretary of the Party. 46/

To Warsaw to head off this prospect flew a Soviet delegation that included Soviet Politburo members Khrushchev, Mikoyan, Molotov and Kaganovich, the commander-in-chief of the Warsaw Pact and some ten other Soviet generals. 47/ While the Kremlin leaders raged at their Polish counterparts, ominous Soviet military movements were also underway. Beginning in early October the number of Soviet divisions in Poland was increased from three to seven, three of these additional units entering from East Germany and the fourth from the USSR.

Those Soviet divisions normally stationed in western Poland meanwhile moved east, toward Warsaw, and stopped only when they were less than 100 miles from the capital. Soviet warships appeared in the Gulf of Gdansk. Needless to say, Soviet forces within Poland could have been further reinforced; it would be incredible to think Soviet units in the western USSR were not then on a high state of alert.

Like the Yugoslavs, the Poles did not behave like lambs, however. The 50,000 man Polish internal security force was mobilized, factory workers were armed, and Gomulka appeared ready to make a dramatic radio speech calling upon the Polish people to resist Soviet intervention as strongly as possible. The Polish armed forces, notwithstanding its Soviet and pro-Soviet commanders, also could not be counted upon by Moscow, and might well have turned on the Russian forces if they had been called upon by Gomulka to do so; Polish air force units provided Warsaw regular reconnaissance data on the movements of Soviet troops. The determination of Gomulka and his supporters was perhaps evidenced most strongly when Polish troops standing before a Soviet tank column 25 miles from Warsaw stopped their advance.

Gomulka, though, also offered the Kremlin delegation important assurances: The complete authority of the Party was going to be maintained; movement toward liberalization was not going to be allowed to proceed; and anti-Soviet sentiments were not going to be tolerated. Warsaw did not differ with the USSR on important elements of security or foreign policy; the Poles wanted only greater control over their domestic affairs. In short, Gomulka presented the image, not of an

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anti-Soviet democrat or liberal communist, but of a tough Marxist-Leninist who promised continued strong Polish-Soviet ties on a firmer foundation. Although probably unconvinced, the Soviet leaders left Warsaw willing to give Gomulka time to prove himself. They were not disappointed, particularly insofar as they might have reflected further on the prospect of intervening Soviet forces meeting fierce resistance and incurring the long-term hatred of the Polish people.

Only three days after the Khrushchev-Gomulka standoff in Warsaw and military confrontation near the capital, the Kremlin faced a political explosion in Hungary. Prompted by events in Poland, but related more fundamentally to the process of de-Stalinization within Hungary that had occurred previously, a very poor economy, and in the end to the despised pro-Soviet government of Erno Gero's political irresolution in dealing with demands by workers, intellectuals and students, the people of Budapest took to the streets on October 23. By day's end the great statue of Stalin had been toppled, a number of demonstrators had been shot, the people were obtaining arms, and Hungarian troops, sent to quell the disturbance, had joined the demonstrators. With the situation out of control and the rebellion spreading, three Soviet armored divisions were called upon to restore order. On October 20-22 and, it would seem, related to earlier student activism in Budapest, floating bridges had been assembled on the Soviet-Hungarian frontiers, Soviet officers on leave in Rumania had been recalled, and Soviet forces in western Hungary had begun to move toward the capital. 48/

Unwilling to engage in full-scale combat, however, the Kremlin witnessed a standoff in the Hungarian streets, as the dissidents attacked Soviet tanks with Molotov cocktails and responded to Soviet fire by erecting barricades and otherwise entrenching themselves. After several days of street fighting Moscow allowed Gero to be replaced as Party First Secretary by Janos Kadar and permitted Imre Nagy to form a new government. Like Gomulka in Poland, Nagy had been a Stalin-era purge victim and had substantial public support. Two days later, with a semblance of control restored, Soviet forces began to withdraw from the capital.

As in the case of Poland, this retrenchment seems best explained as a decision by the Kremlin to stand back and wait and see--that is, to give the new leadership in Hungary a chance to show that it could restore Marxist-Leninist order before taking the consequential step of imposing a definitive military solution. Despite the analogy, Nagy, who quickly appeared the dominant figure, was not a Hungarian Gomulka and the street situation in Hungary was radically different from in Poland. Worker, provincial and military councils became the order of the day, the workers and students did not give up their arms, the security police were subjected to violent popular repression, and demands rose for a proclamation of neutrality and the withdrawal of all Soviet troops from Hungary. Unable to control these further developments and being himself sympathetic to them, Nagy responded by abolishing the one-party state and, after new movements by Soviet troops were reported, announced Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact.

These developments Moscow could not accept; its answer was the Red Army.

Within days 200,000 Soviet troops and 2,000-2,500 tanks were engaged in suppressing the movement toward independence in Hungary, those units already in the country being reinforced by divisions drawn from the USSR, Rumania and Poland. Soviet air strikes supported these ground forces which, after sealing Hungary off from the West and Budapest within it, used whatever violence was necessary to destroy its opposition. At least several thousand Hungarians were killed and many thousands more were wounded during the fighting which, beginning on November 4, lasted a full week. Terror, to strike fear into the populace, was also practiced.

While facing this crisis, Moscow was also concerned that the combination of Poland's "October" and the uprising in Hungary might spread to other Eastern European nations. Hence as a precautionary move, Soviet armored units were deployed to Bulgaria, from which the Red Army had withdrawn in 1948; additional forces were deployed to East Germany; replacement divisions for those sent to Hungary rumbled into Rumania; and 20-40 divisions massed close to crossing points on the Soviet-Polish border. 49/

#### Prague's Spring and the Rumanian Coda

Unlike Hungary in 1956, the threat presented to the USSR by Czechoslovakia in 1968 evolved over many months. The Dubcek government, moreover, retained much greater control over developments than did Imre



Nagy; nor were street demonstrations or any other form of popular insurrection a part of this picture. The slow evolution of events in Prague, the lack of popular violence, and absence of anti-Soviet sentiments expressed by the Czech government explains the equally gradual and hesitant buildup of the Kremlin's will to intervene forcefully and, along that road, the demonstrative use of Soviet military power in the months preceding the August invasion.

In January 1968 the pro-Soviet and Stalinist Antonin Novotny was replaced in his position as First Secretary of the Czech communist party by Alexander Dubcek. Two months later the emergence of a free press was apparent. Then in April, Prague issued the "Action Program," a document that allowed a role to other political parties, the rehabilitation of the victims of Stalinism, and a general regime humanization. Talk of Prague seeking a major loan from West Germany was a further sign of unraveling. The last was particularly threatening to the East German government; both the Gomulka regime in Poland and East Berlin were anxious that the liberalization in Czechoslovakia would be seen by their own citizens as an example to be followed. 50/

The Kremlin was willing to abandon Novotny and to countenance some degree of party reform in Czechoslovakia, but the free rein that the end of censorship allowed was profoundly upsetting as was the movement toward a multi-party state. Moscow wanted the Czech leadership to return to prior censorship, which was formally abandoned in June, to prohibit the expression of anti-Soviet sentiments, and to strictly control the activities of the liberal radicals who were pushing

for further reforms. No less upsetting were periodic calls in the media for a Czechoslovakian position of neutrality in international affairs. Perhaps most angering of all to the USSR was the August 10 publication in Rude Pravo of draft party statutes ending democratic centralism within the Czech communist party, while scheduled for September 9 in Czechoslovakia was the Fourteenth Extraordinary Party Congress during which pro-Soviet Central Committee members were expected to be ousted and replaced by Dubcek followers who would then validate the political change that had taken place. 'The Warsaw Pact must react before this Party Congress can take place,' said Gomulka. 51/

With democratic factionalism and an unrestrained press in Prague in the offing, the Kremlin had good reason to believe that its influence, let alone control, over events in Czechoslovakia had eroded drastically and was about to be terminated. Another Yugoslavia or Rumania might have remained tolerable; a Gomulkaist Czechoslovakia almost certainly would have been. But the Czech situation in August 1968 resembled Hungary in 1956, minus only the street chaos after Imre Nagy had become premier. Marxist-Leninist party principles were being abandoned and it was reasonable to conjecture that, if allowed to, eventually Czechoslovakia would be coopted to the West. For all this political danger, Prague did not threaten to forcefully resist military intervention by the USSR and other Warsaw Treaty members; nor could any preparations or other indicators of this intent be discerned. Thus it was reasonable for the Kremlin to conclude that those grave political dangers it perceived could be aborted in short order without major violence. The only real danger was the impact of

this action upon the USSR's international image and other relationships. This was not inhibiting enough.

On August 20 Soviet and allied armed forces that were to total an estimated 400,000 men (29 divisions) began crossing Czechoslovakia's frontiers, supported by a Soviet tactical air-army and transport aircraft that brought an airborne division into the country on the night of the invasion. The Soviet divisions were about equally drawn from the USSR and elsewhere in Eastern Europe--no Soviet forces were permanently garrisoned in Czechoslovakia before the intervention. Poland and East Germany each provided no less than two divisions; less than division-size units were sent by Hungary and Bulgaria. 52/ Although it was prepared for numerous contingencies, this invasion force met no conventional or guerrilla resistance and secured its military objectives in short order. The USSR and its allies built up toward this intervention for many months, however, not only in their increased frustration and verbal diplomacy, but also in their use of military power.

In March, just after liberalism had begun to flower in Prague, Soviet and East German troops exercised on short notice near the GDR-Czech border while Dubcek was being told at the Dresden meeting of Warsaw Pact leaders then taking place that things were going too far in Czechoslovakia. 53/ After the Action Program was published, Red Army units in East Germany and Poland were reported moving toward Czechoslovakia. 54/ And, at the end of May, while the Czech central committee was discussing further reforms, Warsaw Treaty staff exercises were held in Czechoslovakia. In preparation for full field exercises,

Soviet, Polish and East German units began entering Czechoslovakia in early June. In the midst of the exercises, which began on June 20, Czech newspapers printed the Two Thousand Words manifesto. Issued over the names of a number of prominent signatories, this document called for a faster-paced democratization and resistance to Soviet pressure.

Although the field exercises in Czechoslovakia ended on July 2, it was not until early August that the participating Soviet units were completely withdrawn. On top of this pressure, Moscow orchestrated beginning in the latter part of July Exercise NIEMEN. Billed as the "largest logistical exercises" in Soviet history, these joint air and ground maneuvers by Soviet, East German, Polish and Hungarian forces spanned these four nations' borders with Czechoslovakia. 55/ Among this exercise's special touches were simulated nuclear operations and the Kremlin's calling up of reservists. Also in July, Soviet navy head Admiral S.G. Gorshkov commanded joint naval operations, including Polish and East German vessels, in northern European seas and the North Atlantic. This exercise, code-named SEVER, has been seen as "a part of a larger Soviet effort to deter Western intervention (or counterintervention) in Czechoslovakia... one part of a widespread and unusually blatant influence attempt." 56/ Finally, immediately following the NIEMEN exercise which ended on August 10, new maneuvers were begun in the USSR, Poland and GDR, and several days later in Hungary. These proved to be the countdown and cover for the invasion.

As soon as Czechoslovakia was secured the Kremlin took the further step of imparting a serious warning to Rumania to watch its behavior. Bucharest had entered upon an independent course a half decade earlier and had caused Moscow great chagrin by its diplomacy in the Sino-Soviet dispute, the Arab-Israeli conflict and other matters, including those earlier developments in Czechoslovakia. Prior to the invasion, Rumanian party leader Ceausescu had been warmly received in Prague and the Rumanian example had lent the Czechs strong moral support. Bucharest also had refused to take part in any of the exercises mentioned above or the invasion.

The Rumanians thus may not have been too surprised in the last days of August when Soviet forces in Bessarabia were reinforced and a military buildup in Bulgaria was reported. Why was Rumania spared from invasion, though, it may be asked? One part of the answer, I believe, has been summed up best by Philip Windsor, as follows:

Rumania had never challenged the "leading role of the Party;" on the contrary, it ceaselessly reaffirmed it. Rumania did not threaten, as Czechoslovakia had threatened, to make nonsense of the principles by which political life in the USSR and the states of Eastern Europe was conducted, by showing that socialism could be achieved without the totalitarian apparatus of state and party control. On the contrary, it ceaselessly reaffirmed the necessity for such control. Even farther, the original Rumanian quarrel with the USSR dated from the Soviet decision to de-Stalinize. . . the Rumanian challenge was based on an ultramontanist more papist than the Pope. 57/

Bucharest also made it known that it would fight if Warsaw Treaty forces entered the country. A week before the Czech invasion, Ceausescu related that Rumania was strengthening its military capability, and on the day of the invasion Rumanian armed forces minister Colonel-

General Ion Ionita ordered his forces to be ready to defend the nation 'at a moment's notice'. 58/ In sum, Rumania's independent course presented the Kremlin and its Eastern European allies with a fundamentally different and less serious political threat than did Czechoslovakia while, unlike Prague, Bucharest coupled with this the threat of resistance to intervention.

Of further significance to the Kremlin were the ramifications of intervention in Rumania. Only doubtfully would Yugoslavia have lent Bucharest practical support in the face of aggression; it is also difficult to believe the United States would have done much. Nevertheless, Soviet intervention against a resistant Rumania would have ignited a much more serious international crisis than did the occupation of Czechoslovakia, one which Moscow could not be as certain about controlling. In a speech on August 30, President Johnson, after suggesting that the intervention in Czechoslovakia might be repeated elsewhere in the days ahead in Eastern Europe, warned in words borrowed from Shakespeare's Julius Caesar: "Let no-one unleash the dogs of war." 59/ This dimension of uncertainty and risk may have further reinforced Soviet hesitancy about suppressing Bucharest's insolence and independence, to the extent such action was given serious consideration.

The Kremlin again used military power to caution Rumania in 1971. What particularly upset Moscow then were new initiatives by Bucharest in its relations with China and the perception of Rumania's entering into an informal Balkan federation hostile to the USSR. It

was disclosed in April that Rumanian diplomacy had been directed at promoting improved relations between the United States and China. Bucharest had also recently improved its relations with Albania giving rise to speculation about a Belgrade-Bucharest-Tirana axis. Thus in early June, while Rumanian party leader Ceausescu was visiting China, the USSR mounted a major military exercise near Rumania's borders. For twelve days ten Soviet divisions (including one airborne division) and the Black Sea Fleet carried out maneuvers which could not but cause anxiety in Rumania, as did a request to allow three Soviet divisions to transit Rumania to Bulgaria to conduct maneuvers there. Then in August Soviet, Hungarian and Czechoslovak troops conducted exercises in Hungary near the Rumanian border. These quite abnormal maneuvers coincided with a Warsaw Pact conference in the Crimea from which Rumania was excluded, an action unprecedented since the Bratislava meeting in 1968 prior to the occupation of Czechoslovakia. The Crimean conference communique condemned "right-wing and left-wing opportunism"--read Rumania and Yugoslavia on the one hand and China on the other. 60/

Afterwards the Soviet, Polish, Czechoslovak and Hungarian media launched a major campaign against Rumania, which unlike Yugoslavia and Albania, had not been written off by the Kremlin. Moscow was made more anxious by reports in mid-August of a visit in the fall by Chinese Premier Chou En-lai to Rumania as well as to Yugoslavia and Albania. In the end, though, the Kremlin absorbed Bucharest's further quest for independence, mollified perhaps by Chou En-lai's not visiting the Balkans after all and by President Tito's arguments when Soviet Party Chairman Brezhnev

visited Yugoslavia with a reported month's notice in September. Soviet maneuvers scheduled to be held in Bulgaria, the first in five years, were cancelled at this time, a move which seemed to signal an end to the tension that had been building up.

#### The Brezhnev Doctrine

The treaties signed in the 1940s with the USSR by Eastern European nations did not sanction Soviet intervention into their domestic affairs or other intrusion upon their sovereignty. Rather these treaties stressed national independence and the equality of the parties. 61/ The Brezhnev Doctrine was an attempt to legitimize Soviet military intervention in Czechoslovakia as well as elsewhere in Eastern Europe as might occur in the future. Making particular reference to the invasion of Czechoslovakia, but having a general applicability, "Sovereignty and the International Duties of Socialist Countries," printed in Pravda on September 26, 1968, contained the following passage:

The weakening of any of the links in the world socialist system directly affects all the socialist countries, which cannot look on indifferently when this happens. Thus, with talk about the right of nations to self-determination the anti-socialist elements in Czechoslovakia actually covered up a demand for so-called neutrality and Czechoslovakia's withdrawal from the socialist community. However, the implementation of "self-determination" of that kind or, in other words, the detaching of Czechoslovakia from the socialist community would have come into conflict with Czechoslovakia's vital interests and would have been detrimental to the other socialist states. Such "self-determination," as a result of which NATO troops would have been able to come up to the Soviet borders,



while the community of European socialist countries would have been rent, would have encroached, in actual fact, upon the vital interests of the peoples of these countries and would be in fundamental conflict with the right of these peoples to socialist self-determination. 62/

The following week Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko told the U.N. General Assembly:

The countries of the socialist commonwealth have their own vital interests, their own obligations, including those of safeguarding their mutual security and their own socialist principles of mutual relations based on fraternal assistance, solidarity and internationalism. 63/

Finally, Party Chairman Brezhnev told the Fifth Polish Party Congress on November 12, 1968:

...when internal and external forces, hostile to socialism, seek to reverse the development of any socialist country whatsoever in the direction of the restoration of the capitalist order, when a threat to the cause of socialism arises in that country, a threat to the security of the socialist commonwealth as a whole--this already becomes not only a problem of the people of the country concerned, but also a common problem and the concern of all socialist countries. 64/

That the Soviet military command also perceived intervention into the domestic affairs of Eastern European nations as an institutional mission was made clear by Soviet Politburo member and Defense Minister Marshal A.A. Grechko. "Soviet Armed Forces," he affirmed in a 1971 treatise:

keep vigilant watch over the aggressive intrigues of the imperialists, and are ready at any moment with all their might to come to the defense of the socialist victories

of the allied states. Giving international aid to Czechoslovakia...was a clear manifestation of the fraternal unity of the socialist nations and their armies. 65/

In Czechoslovakia this "watch" was confirmed by the establishment of a Soviet Central Group of Forces of five divisions--as in Hungary after 1956, when the Soviet garrison there was increased from two to five divisions. 66/

#### Supporting Fraternal Allies

Moscow has not afforded direct military support to communist movements seeking power in the third world. Since the 1948 coup in Czechoslovakia six nations have obtained communist regimes: China (1949), North Vietnam (1954), Cuba (1961), and South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos (all in 1975). The support given the Chinese communists in the 1940s has already been described. Soviet military personnel did not aid the Viet Minh against the French or the seizure of power by Fidel Castro, who did not declare himself or begin to adhere to Marxist-Leninist precepts until after he was in office. Nor was such help given to North Vietnam, the Khymer Rouge (Cambodia) or the Pathet Lao (Laos) in support of their actions in the former SEATO protocol states.

The closest Moscow has come toward providing direct military support to a communist movement in the third world occurred in the early 1960s when supplies were air transported to the Pathet Lao and their North Vietnamese mentors in Laos. This aid was first given to the noncommunist Kong Le-Souvanna Phouma government in Laos, however. The similar help given the Pathet Lao-North Vietnamese forces in Laos

took place after that government was driven out of Vientiane by the U.S. supported forces of General Phoumi Nosavan. Motivated by a continuing concern to counter Chinese influence and interest in weakening the U.S. posture in Southeast Asia, Soviet policy was then directed at the restoration of a neutralist government in Laos rather than the establishment of a communist regime. 67/

The essential task of discrete Soviet political-military operations in Eastern Europe, it was observed, has been to contain and suppress systemic political change and alternative policy courses sought from within by the governments and peoples of these nations. Beyond probes by individual Western military aircraft from time to time, the West has not directed specific military threats at Soviet allies in Eastern Europe. The closest things to exceptions occurred in 1946 when the United States responded to Yugoslavia's shooting at and otherwise forcing down a number of Western aircraft and to incidents over the sovereignty of Venezia Giulia and Trieste by deploying a number of B-29 nuclear bombers to Europe, where they flew along the border of Soviet-occupied territory. Yugoslavia was then considered to be under Stalin's thumb. 68/

Serious external threats were presented in later years to fraternal Soviet allies outside Eastern Europe, however. North Korea, China, Cuba and North Vietnam were at one time or another all subjected to the threat or reality of attack by U.S. armed forces. In the face of continuing and specific danger to these allies the USSR provided them large volumes of armaments, economic assistance and technical support; but Soviet armed forces units were used only in very limited ways and then with extreme caution.

In the Korean War, the Quemoy and Cuban missile crises, and the Vietnam War, Moscow was more concerned to avoid conflict with the United States than it was to protect the sovereignty and security of these allies. Although the latter may not have expected the USSR to go to war on their behalf, they did seem to expect the Kremlin to do more than it was willing to do, particularly during the Khrushchev era in light of Soviet rhetoric in this period. These allies of Moscow may have even felt something of a right to powerful Soviet political-military demonstrations to caution the United States against directing military action at them.

#### The Korean War

When the Red Army departed North Korea in the fall of 1948 it left behind, in the words of a U.S. National Security Council memorandum, "a well organized 'People's Army', officered in part by Soviet citizen Koreans who formerly served in the Red Army, and advised by Red Army personnel attached to the Soviet 'Embassy' in north Korea." 69/ Thereafter the USSR provided Pyongyang a large volume of armaments and advisory assistance and at some point in 1949-50, Khrushchev has implied, Soviet combat air units were redeployed to North Korea. 70/

But while Stalin allowed Kim Il-sung the means for war against the South, shortly before this enterprise was launched the USSR withdrew all of its "advisors who were with the North Korean divisions and regiments, as well as the advisors who were serving as consultants and helping to build up the army." 71/ Khrushchev tells us that when he questioned this action, Stalin "snapped back at me. 'It's too dangerous to keep our

advisers there. They might be taken prisoner. We don't want there to be evidence for accusing us of taking part in this business'." 72/

Assuming the veracity of Khrushchev's report, it is nevertheless difficult to determine whether those Soviet pilots and aircraft, forward deployed to North Korea earlier, were also withdrawn prior to the invasion or were pulled back shortly after the conflict began; they were gone by the time the U.S.-led United Nations forces entered North Korea after the successful landing at Incheon. It also seems certain that Soviet pilots never flew over territory not held by North Korean ground forces; no Russian airmen were ever shot down over U.N. held territory. Of further importance: Soviet ships and submarines never interfered with U.S. naval operations in the Sea of Japan or Yellow Sea; Moscow failed to respond militarily to the accidental bombing by U.S. aircraft of a Soviet airfield near Vladivostok in October 1950; and United Nations forces were allowed to completely overrun North Korea in the fall of that year. 73/ The weight of indication supports strongly a view of the USSR as being extremely anxious to avoid provoking a U.S. attack on the Soviet Far East and concerned that Soviet military intervention in North Korea would lead to a new world war.

If Soviet airmen were in North Korea when Kim launched his attack, this could be viewed as an important sign to Pyongyang of Moscow's commitment to at least the defense of North Korea, even if it might not be a deterrent to the United States insofar as this presence was so tightly masked. By contrast, the U.S. Air Force did report Soviet aircraft as being present in the area of Shanghai at this time, presumably

to deter and defend against bombing by Chinese nationalist aircraft coming from Taiwan. 74/ If a Soviet air presence in North Korea did exist and had not been masked, it would have risked causing the United States to reconsider the exclusion of South Korea from the announced U.S. "defense perimeter." Presumably, Stalin expected North Korea to triumph in a conflict with the South and believed, on the basis of previous U.S. public statements and other behavior, that in the absence of known Soviet intervention the United States would stand aside from this fratricide. Another hypothesis worth mentioning, though, Pyongyang may have begun these hostilities one or even two months earlier than had been previously planned and, thus, before an also previously scheduled withdrawal of Soviet air units. 75/

Chinese, not Soviet, ground forces entered the war after UN forces routed the North Koreans and gained control of the entire Korean Peninsula. Only after the U.N. forces were pushed back and a new front was formed did Soviet air units reenter the picture. Sometime in 1951, it would seem, the USSR deployed approximately two air regiments to North Korea, rotating these squadrons frequently thereafter. Again, though, it is impossible to say much about their activities. Moscow never advertised this presence and no Soviet pilots were ever brought down over U.N.-held territory. While perhaps as many as 1000-1500 Soviet pilots were rotated through these units, it appears that, at most, their role was to fly defensive actions. Soviet ground forces also were deployed after the front was stabilized and U.S. objectives were announced to be limited. In late 1951 U.S. intelligence sources placed the total number of Soviet military men at

up to about 25,000, including a 5,000 man artillery division and 7,500 antiaircraft artillery personnel. 76/

Out of consideration of Soviet security interests, Stalin was probably willing to take military action in the event of a Western attempt to wrest control of northeast China. It may not have been coincidental that a Soviet aircraft fired on a U.N. fighter patrol in September 1950 just after an airfield in Manchuria was strafed. Prior to China's entering the war U.S. intelligence assessments noted the presence in Manchuria of "Soviet-type jet aircraft" and fifteen Red Army divisions (including or excluding—the presentation is unclear—46,000 Mongolian Army troops and 40,000 Soviet artillerymen in Chinese military attire.) At a later date Soviet air units in Manchuria engaged U.S. aircraft in defensive operations on a number of occasions, and in one instance unmarked Soviet aircraft operating out of the USSR clashed with U.S. navy aircraft. Soviet sources have spoken of the transfer of "several Soviet air divisions to China's Northeastern provinces" and claimed that "in the ensuing air battles Soviet flyers shot down scores of U.S. aircraft." 77/

All things considered, Soviet military activity during the Korean War was designed most importantly to not provoke a war between the USSR and the United States; secondly, to avoid a neighboring U.S. military threat to the Soviet Far East; thirdly, to maintain a strong alliance with its communist neighbors; and only fourthly, to insure the security of those neighbors' citizens and territory. Notwithstanding the combat engagement of Soviet aircraft and ground air defense units and deployments first to China and then North Korea, Soviet behavior is best characterized as

cautious and prudent, and not given to recklessness or serious risk-taking. The usage of Soviet air units in combat in 1951-53 appears to have been allowed only after General Douglas MacArthur was fired and the Truman administration made absolutely clear its intention to wage only a limited war and its willingness to accept something close to the status quo ante. It is very questionable whether China perceived military support rendered to it by the USSR adequate; it is even more doubtful that the North Koreans were satisfied.

In the dozen years following the Korean War, China, Cuba and North Vietnam also faced major danger from the United States and had need of strong Soviet political-military support. Notwithstanding its rhetoric previous to these crises, the USSR behaved prudently in these instances too. In each of these cases, as during the Korean War, the Kremlin allowed no military activity that could be seriously expected to bring about open U.S.-Soviet conflict. And too, as during the Korean War, the limit to which Moscow appeared willing to go in supporting these allies was air defense.

Soviet aircraft able to deliver nuclear weapons to the United States became operational in 1954-55. On Armed Forces Day 1955 Marshal Konev stated that in addition to defending the USSR, the Red Army was "the defender of the interests of the working people of all nations." Although this did not represent any specific commitment, the Marshal also chose to mention at this time the USSR's having "atomic and hydrogen weapons at its disposal." 78/

Real expansion in the USSR's expressed willingness to use military



power to defend its allies followed the 1957 launching of the first Sputnik. Nonintervention by the West in the 1956 political crises in Poland and Hungary and active U.S. opposition to Britain and France in the Suez crisis that fall probably provided additional confidence. Thus on May Day 1958 Marshal Malinovsky was able to say: "The Soviet Army, Air Force and Navy are strong enough to thwart any attempts of imperialist reaction to disrupt the peaceful labor of our people or the unity and solidarity of the socialist camp." 79/

#### The Offshore Islands Crisis

In August 1958 Chinese communist artillery batteries began a heavy and continuous bombardment of the Quemoy and Matsu island groups held by Taiwan. At first this barrage appeared just another turn in the unyielding confrontation between Peking and Taipei. However, when the shelling did not stop after a time, the belief arose in Taiwan and in the United States that Peking meant not only to demonstrate these islands' vulnerability, but to actually blockade them. Of further concern was Peking's possible intent to invade the islands and even attack Taiwan proper. For two weeks Chinese artillery fire and PT boat operations in the area prevented supplies from being landed upon the islands.

Anticipating some new violence in the ongoing civil war, U.S. military forces in the Pacific area were placed on an alert status in mid-July, and in early August additional U.S. aircraft were deployed to Taiwan and two U.S. navy ships began patrolling the Taiwan Strait. After the shelling from the mainland was inaugurated Washington redeployed as many as seven aircraft carrier task groups, a number of which carried nuclear weapons on board.

Additional U.S. aircraft were sent to Taiwan and into the Pacific area and, on September 7, U.S. warships were ordered to escort Nationalist supply ships to their point of docking at Quemoy. 80/ Yet it remained uncertain whether the United States would go to war with China if the islands were otherwise attacked, notwithstanding Secretary of State Dulles' remarks on September 4 when he 1) said "...Quemoy and Matsu have become increasingly related to the defense of Taiwan"--with which the United States had a mutual defense treaty; 2) saw the security of the United States threatened by the "naked use of force" against Quemoy; and 3) responded to a press question with the advice: "If I were on the Chinese Communist side I would certainly think very hard before I went ahead on the fact of this statement." 81/

To what extent did the USSR support China? Khrushchev related that during the planning stages of the crisis additional Soviet military advisers were sent to China and that Peking turned down an offer by Moscow to deploy Soviet "interceptor squadrons on their territory." 82/ Even if this is true, though, it does not obviate a view of Soviet behavior as being exceedingly prudent. The Soviet Pacific Fleet played no role throughout the crisis; nor has there been a suggestion of any other related Soviet military activity. 83/ Moreover, the Kremlin watched developments for a week before promising Peking on August 31 "moral and material aid" and warning against the view that U.S. hostilities against China could be contained from "spreading...to other regions." 84/ On September 5 Pravda did relate that: "The Soviet Union cannot remain indifferent to events on the border or territory of its great ally.... The instigators and organizers of this latest military venture in the Far East should not calculate that a retaliatory blow will be confined to the Taiwan

Strait and no less the offshore island. They will receive a crushing rebuff which will put an end to U.S. military aggression in the Far East." 85/

By then, however, it was clear that the United States would consider military action only if China went further in its military activity, which Peking did not do. It is difficult to believe Moscow was not assured on this point prior to the Pravda pronouncement. The crisis appeared to have peaked when the USSR offered stronger words in the form of a letter from Khrushchev to President Eisenhower on September 8, the Soviet leader saying in this communication: "An attack on the Chinese People's Republic, which is a great friend, ally and neighbor of our country, is an attack on the Soviet Union. True to its duty, our country will do everything in order together with People's China to defend the security of both states, the interests of peace in the Far East, the interest of peace in the whole world." 86/ This front was maintained in a second letter to the President on September 19, Khrushchev saying then: "Those who harbor plans for an atomic attack on the Chinese People's Republic should not forget that the other side too has atomic and hydrogen weapons and the appropriate means to deliver them, and if the Chinese People's Republic falls victim to such an attack, the aggressor will at once suffer a rebuff by the same means." 87/ The Eisenhower administration rejected this second note out of hand, terming it "abusive and intemperate" and containing "inadmissible threats." 88/

U.S. intelligence reported no overt political-military operations to reinforce these Soviet statements or any preparations for war in the USSR. No related ground, air, or naval demonstrations were staged; nor were any Soviet military deployments observed in conjunction with the crisis. The

USSR's rhetoric, although strong, was not meant to compel U.S. behavior and represented something less than deterrence. With Peking carefully controlling its actions, Moscow only committed itself to respond to a U.S. attack on China, which the Eisenhower administration showed early to be not in the cards if the Chinese communists did not attempt definitive action to wrest the offshore islands from Taiwan. It was also not clear that the United States would so respond even in this circumstance. Moscow also did not commit itself to do anything if the United States responded militarily to a Chinese air or sea attack while avoiding an attack on the mainland. In 1963 an official Chinese government statement related:

In August and September of 1958, the situation in the Taiwan Straits was indeed very tense as a result of the aggression and provocations by the U.S. imperialists. The Soviet leaders expressed their support for China on September 7 and 19 respectively. Although at that time the situation in the Taiwan Straits was tense, there was no possibility that a nuclear war would break out and no need for the Soviet Union to support China with its nuclear weapons. It was only when they were clear that this was the situation that the Soviet leaders expressed their support for China. 89/

The outcome of the Quemoy crisis provided Moscow no cause for hedging about USSR solidarity with its allies, however. These events ended in a standoff in which Taipei retained control of the offshore islands and Peking suffered no punishment for its bombardment while retaining the prerogative of further shelling the area at will. Hence approaching Armed Forces Day 1959, Marshal of the Soviet Union V. Sokolovsky related:

We have the people and the means to rap the knuckles of those who dare to reach for the sacred borders of our Soviet homeland and to violate the peaceful labor and security of our great people and our faithful friends - the peoples of the socialist camp countries. 90/

A year later and with the further confidence afforded by Chairman Khrushchev's visit to the United States and spirit of Camp David, Marshal Malinovsky asserted even more plainly:

The Soviet Army's mighty nuclear rocket equipment enables us to guarantee more securely and dependably than ever before the invincible defense of the land of Soviets and the other socialist countries. 91/

### The Missile Crisis

The conclusion to the 1962 missile crisis perceived in the United States—that is, the forced Soviet withdrawal of missiles and bombers from Cuba—did not affect this rhetoric, as Moscow chose to focus on President Kennedy's declaration that, in return, the United States would not invade Cuba. 92/ However, notwithstanding President Kennedy's pledge, the USSR did not introduce nuclear weapons into Cuba or use its armed forces during the crisis in order to insure the security of the Castro regime. In these events Cuba's security was a very secondary objective to that of getting the United States to accede to demands related to West Germany and West Berlin. 93/

Accompanying the strategic armaments sent to Cuba, however, were surface-to-air and anti-ship cruise missiles, advanced fighter aircraft and four regimental-size armored units. Although it seems certain that these forces were not sent to Cuba independently, but arrived as part of a package with the missiles, we cannot be sure that these essentially defensive units were in their entirety deployed at Moscow's initiative to deter and defend against a U.S. attack aimed at destroying Soviet strategic forces in Cuba. Some of these units may have been sent as a sweetener or in response to a demand by Castro for the concurrent emplacement of Soviet conventional forces

to insure Cuban security more generally. Nevertheless, aside from acceding to this demand as necessary to its larger objective, Moscow may not have seen these possibly further deployments as adding to the risk being undertaken. Not expecting a powerful response to the installation of strategic missiles in Cuba, Khrushchev was also freer with words before the President's dramatic pronouncement on October 22.

On September 7, 1962 President Kennedy asked Congress for standby authority to call up 150,000 reservists in order "to permit prompt and effective responses as necessary, to challenges which may be presented in any part of the free world." Khrushchev perceived correctly that Washington's concern was Cuba and, in a letter on September 11, retorted that "one cannot now attack Cuba and expect that the aggressor will be free from punishment for this attack. If such an attack is made, that will be the beginning of the unleashing of war." 94/

Khrushchev did not reaffirm this commitment in his response to President Kennedy's announcement of the quarantine and demand that Soviet strategic forces emplaced in Cuba be removed. When the President "ordered the armed forces to prepare for any eventualities," Khrushchev denounced this action as "a step towards unleashing a thermonuclear war," but he went only so far as to "issue a serious warning to the U.S. Government that...it is assuming a grave responsibility for the fate of peace and recklessly playing with fire." 95/ And while massive U.S. ground and air forces were being marshalled in the southeastern United States for the possible invasion of Cuba, neither were Soviet volunteers promised or any other signal given that a U.S. attack on Cuba would bring about a Soviet attack on the United States; nor were threats

made against the similarly exposed Western position in Berlin. The moguls in the Kremlin meant to avoid risks to the USSR on Castro's behalf. President Kennedy's promise not to invade Cuba did not satisfy the objectives of the deployment of missiles to Cuba; it provided Moscow a face saving quid pro quo for these weapons' withdrawal.

#### The Watershed of Vietnam

Vietnam, not Cuba, exposed Khrushchev's verbal falsehood that Soviet military men guarded the security of fraternal allies at large and forced the termination of this rhetoric. Such bluster continued to have value and seemed to risk little well into 1964, Moscow obtaining for itself great respect as the self-proclaimed guardian of world socialism. This image was particularly important as the rift with China widened and deepened. Peking could attack Kremlin revisionism and proclaim its own way as the path of righteousness. The USSR, though, had the might and was on record as being ready to use its military power to protect communist gains.

In early 1962 a U.S. Military Assistance Command Vietnam was established and U.S. Army transport helicopter companies began to support South Vietnamese forces. By mid-1964 16,500 U.S. military personnel were in South Vietnam. 96/ But that was where the war was being fought. Although Washington castigated North Vietnam regularly and demanded that Hanoi terminate its support of the Viet Cong, the North remained an untouched sanctuary, much like China during the Korean War. Moreover, the U.S. forces in South Vietnam in 1964 were poor compensation for the inabilities of the Saigon forces. The Kremlin probably expected this situation to continue and saw victory coming soon.

After all, notwithstanding the South Vietnamese forces' poor performance

in the field, the impression was w t large that President Johnson did not intend to send U.S. servicemen to fight in Vietnam. The Kremlin might also have noticed that Senator Goldwater was suffering in the polls in part because of his more bellicose position. If the United States might yet take some stronger action before accepting Saigon's defeat, Moscow had no strong reason to expect the course taken in 1965, only weeks after the President's inauguration.

The Johnson administration's response to the attack on the destroyers Maddox and Turner Joy in August 1964 did take Moscow aback. Although the Kremlin had an image to protect, it did not intend to provide Hanoi with anything more than economic and military assistance. A Tass statement thus evidenced nervousness and caution, and interest was then shown in a negotiated settlement. 97/

Only with this event passed did the Soviet rhetoric of commitment continue for another half year. New confidence was even afforded when in October the United States decided not to retaliate against the North following a Viet Cong attack upon the air facility at Bien Hoa where a number of U.S. casualties were suffered and 13 B-57 bombers were destroyed or damaged. Of even earlier significance may have been the lack of a forceful U.S. response in September to what may have been a North Vietnamese action against the U.S. destroyers Morton and Edwards in the Tonkin Gulf. 98/ The new team in the Kremlin--Khrushchev was ousted in mid-October 1964--may also have been concerned not to break publicly with the past too quickly, especially where this might offend the military. Thus on Revolution Day 1964 Leonid Brezhnev told listeners that Soviet military power provided "a reliable



guarantee that the security of the USSR and the other socialist countries is dependably insured." 99/ The new men in the Kremlin seized power, however, partly out of discontent with the impetuosity and high stakes political gambling of their predecessor. Their preference was to first obtain and then work from a position of strength, avoiding, meanwhile, false hopes and illusions.

Moscow's official response to the U.S. bombing (FLAMING DART I) of Donghoi and other points in North Vietnam following the early February 1965 Viet Cong attack on the Pleiku air base in which more than 100 Americans were killed or wounded did, in fact, indicate a new style and lexicon. The message to the United States was that this action would hinder "the establishment of normal relations with the U.S.A. and their improvement." Rather than going out on a limb for Hanoi, Moscow informed the United States, and truthfully, that the US' R "will be forced to take further measures to guard the security and strengthen the defense capacity" of the DRV. No allusion was made to the use of Soviet armed forces to support this fraternal ally, however. Moscow was referring rather to its willingness to provide as much economic and military assistance as Hanoi might need. 100/

The new Soviet leaders' reluctance to back North Vietnam militarily in any serious way was confirmed on Armed Forces Day 1965 by Marshal Malinovsky. Following by a week further U.S. air strikes (FLAMING DART II) against the North, in response to a Viet Cong attack on the Qui Nhon barracks where several score U.S. military personnel were killed or wounded, Soviet military power was now only "at the service of socialist interests and social

progress." 101/ In short, by March 1965, when the United States shifted from "retaliatory" to "graduated" bombing (ROLLING THUNDER), thereby initiating the air war against North Vietnam, Moscow had retrenched its position considerably. An editorial in Pravda on March 10 confirmed that the rhetoric of the decade of Khrushchev was both empty and over with. "The Soviet people," it concluded, "together with the peace-loving peoples of the entire world, angrily condemn the new U.S. acts of aggression in South Vietnam. The international public expresses full solidarity with the heroic struggle of the Vietnamese people for the freedom and independence of their homeland and has faith that this struggle will end in complete victory" (*italics added*). 102/

Between 1965 and 1968 and again in 1972 North Vietnam was subjected to heavy U.S. bombing attacks. It has never been suggested that Soviet airmen aided in the defense against these onslaughts. Nor did the USSR provide North Vietnam with ground-based air defense crews to any large extent as were lent to Egypt in 1970. Hanoi was given a large volume of armaments and other military equipment, but in the way of Soviet personnel, Moscow appears to have gone no further than to second military advisers and perhaps some surface-to-air missile crews. This is not to suggest that these Red Army men did not provide important support to Hanoi; they did, particularly in the air defense effort and communications fields. So too, perhaps, did East German missile crewmen who, wearing Russian uniforms and speaking Russian, might have been mistaken for Red Army personnel. The practical value to Hanoi was twofold: 1) North Vietnamese defenses were made more effective; and 2) U.S. political leaders were deterred from bombing certain

military sites. Washington sought to avoid the inference that it was ordering attacks upon Russians. 103/ The USSR did not deploy regular Red Army or air combat units to North Vietnam, however, as were sent to Egypt later. In comparison to the approximately 20,000 Soviet military personnel emplaced in Egypt during the early 1970s, only about 1,000 Soviet military personnel were reported in North Vietnam between 1968 and 1972.

In November 1965 Edward Crankshaw did cite in the London Observer a purported letter from the Chinese Central Committee to the Soviet Party and Government which included the following lines: '...you wanted to send via China a regular army formation of 4,000 men to be stationed in Vietnam without first obtaining her [Hanoi's] consent' and 'under the pretext of defending the territorial air of Vietnam you wanted to occupy and use one or two airfields in southwestern China and to station a Soviet armed force of five-hundred men there'. 104/ If Moscow really did want to deploy a motorized rifle or support regiment to North Vietnam it could have done so by sea, which it never did. Assuming the letter's legitimacy, though, another possibility is that faking merely meant "personnel" and did not mean to imply anything more than 4,000 military advisers. It, of course, is possible that at one time the USSR had several thousand of these personnel in North Vietnam.

The most important argument in favor of discounting a strict interpretation of the words 'regular army formation' in the Crankshaw story, though, is our continuing perception of Khrushchev's successors. If there is one image of the Soviet political leadership that succeeded Nikita Khrushchev, it is that these men were careful, prudent and sober-minded,

businesslike in approach and style, and not given to emotional or romantic excess when Soviet security might be at risk. They seemed to prefer to build positions of strength and more certain gains than to engage in gambles risking a loss of control and large setbacks. Sending personnel to advise the North Vietnamese and, perhaps, in some instances to engage in ground air defense operations increased the effectiveness of their ally's military forces, but still could be counted upon to not bring about a full-scale superpower military confrontation.

Deploying a motorized rifle regiment or large-size Red Army air defense force to North Vietnam might have made the Kremlin look weak if those units did not engage in hostilities, or caused a very serious crisis or led to further escalation of the war and risk to the USSR if those forces did openly engage in combat. The mere deployment of a Red Army formation could not have been counted upon to coerce the United States to stop the bombing. Possibly the Johnson administration would have desisted if Soviet missilemen were emplaced in force as they were in Egypt; yet the Kremlin could not dismiss the possibility, for example, of a U.S. attack on Soviet merchantmen making war deliveries in Haiphong harbor. And then what?, the Soviets might have asked themselves. If Moscow could not ignore possibilities like this one, the actual acceptance of such risk on North Vietnam's account was not in keeping with the new leadership's apparent character.

As to the suggestion of a deployment of Soviet aircraft to China, this might have served Moscow's objectives in the Sino-Soviet dispute well and, assuming those planes would not have been used to defend North Vietnam, that action also would have been risk-free. While the presence of Soviet aircraft

in southern China would have made Peking appear weak and allowed the USSR to present itself as deterring U.S. hostilities against the People's Republic, the Kremlin could have had strong confidence that the United States did not intend aggression against China.

Finally to be considered are Secretary Brezhnev's statement in late March 1965 about Soviet citizens who were "expressing readiness to take part in the Vietnamese people's struggle" and a Soviet-North Vietnamese declaration in April which said: "If the U.S. aggression against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam is intensified, the Soviet government, if need be and if the DRV government so requests, will give its consent to the departure for Vietnam of Soviet citizens who, guided by a sense of proletarian internationalism, have expressed the desire to fight for the just cause of the Vietnamese people." <sup>105/</sup> The timing of these statements does lend veracity to the reported letter from Peking to Moscow. But given the fact that the United States did send more than 500,000 troops to South Vietnam and continued the air war against the North for three years (with some stops and starts), it may be suggested that the United States went at least as far as Moscow and Hanoi imagined in the spring of 1965. If so, then all the Kremlin had in mind in these carefully worded statements was a sizable number of military advisers. Otherwise, they would seem a bluff directed at the United States or a cynical attempt to curry favor with Hanoi. Another thought, of course, is that Moscow and Hanoi were seriously concerned about the possibility of United States ground forces invading North Vietnam as they did North Korea in 1950. What is a third alternative, the Kremlin may have been prepared to seriously consider providing Hanoi with a Soviet-

manned ground air defense system if the United States further escalated the attacks and the North Vietnamese proved unable to use Soviet equipment effectively. 106/ Whatever the real case, the ambiguity of Moscow's commitment and the Kremlin's prudent behavior throughout the conflict should not be forgotten.

#### Concordance in Rhetoric and Action

As compared with the Khrushchev era, Moscow's relatively cautious words after 1965, made necessary by resolve not to respond martially to the U.S. bombing of North Vietnam, was a more accurate indicator of the degree to which the grey men in the Kremlin, increasingly dominated by Brezhnev, were willing to go in supporting fraternal allies. Eastern Europe continuing to be of the greatest concern, so Kremlin rhetoric did mark this region out explicitly as lying within the USSR's defense perimeter. Delivering the main report on Revolution Day 1966, Politburo member A. Ya. Pelshe affirmed only that "the Soviet Union, in cooperation with the other socialist countries of Europe, stands firmly on guard of peace and the security of the European continent." This statement was made with Vietnam clearly in mind, for it followed directly the phrase, "the United States proceeds farther and farther along the path of extending the aggression against one of the states of the socialist community." 107/ When things went too far in Czechoslovakia, Soviet military power was used to forcefully reconstruct the political fabric in Prague; and having gone this far, as we have seen, Moscow then also chose to stage threatening military exercises near Rumania's borders in an attempt to intimidate Bucharest.

As compared with its interests in Eastern Europe, Soviet concern about North Vietnam remained small; hence the weak replies by the Kremlin to U.S. bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong and mining of Haiphong harbor (LINEBACKER I) in response to North Vietnam's 1972 Easter offensive and, in December 1972, to the bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong again (LINEBACKER II), including the use of B-52s while Washington pressed for better terms on which to end the war. Denunciations and demands were made by Soviet leaders in both instances, but in neither did Moscow issue an ultimatum or stage a serious show of force.

Six surface combatants (a cruiser and five destroyers) and five submarines were positioned about 500 nautical miles from U.S. forces in the Gulf of Tonkin for a few days in response to the LINEBACKER I operation. 108/ Although some of these ships were apparently returning to the USSR from routine deployment in the Indian Ocean, this presence was not routine. Almost certainly it was occasioned by the damaging of four Soviet merchantships by U.S. aircraft bombing Haiphong harbor. In explicit response to this bombing, in which one Soviet seaman was killed, the USSR upbraided the Nixon administration for 'gangster activities' and warned it would take 'all appropriate steps' to protect its ships 'wherever they would be'. 109/ The low-keyed presence of Soviet warships in the South China Sea would seem to have been meant to supplement this relatively mild diplomatic protest. It was perhaps also the least the Kremlin felt it could do in light of its decision at this time to go forward with the Moscow summit and SALT I agreement. This Soviet naval presence, also possibly ordered by only a local commander, provided small comfort to Hanoi. It could be calculated to cause

the United States little anxiety about bombing North Vietnam and to not provoke a U.S.-Soviet crisis. No Soviet military action was taken in response to LINEBACKER II.

After the Paris agreement on Vietnam in January 1973, Moscow expanded only minimally upon the image of Soviet armed forces as guarantor of the security of the extended communist community. "A rebuff to an aggressor, if he dares to infringe on the interests of any country of the socialist community, can now be organized not only by its own forces but also the forces and means of all the socialist states," related First Deputy Defense Minister, Army General S. Sokolov on Armed Forces Day 1973. 110/ Notwithstanding the improbability of renewed U.S. military action in Southeast Asia, Defense Minister Marshal Grechko was only slightly more assertive on Revolution Day 1973 when he told his audience that Soviet military men "are always ready to fulfill their sacred duty in the defense of our motherland and, alongside the soldiers of fraternal socialist armies, to defend the great gains of socialism." 111/ This ambiguous formulation was reiterated with minor variation and flourish through the remainder of the decade. 112/

#### Provocations by North Korea

The one serious military action allowed by the Brezhnev leadership for the purpose of showing support to a communist regime threatened by the United States as a result of one of its adventures followed the seizure of the U.S.S. Pueblo by North Korean patrol boats. In response to the North Korean action the Johnson administration deployed Strategic Air Command bombers to the western Pacific and massed in the Sea of Japan three aircraft carriers and 16 other surface combatants--the largest display of U.S. naval power since



the Cuban missile crisis. Two Soviet ships on patrol in the Tsushima Strait then proceeded to harass the U.S. ships and provoke a number of small incidents. A harsh statement in Pravda and deployment to the area of nine additional warships and a number of other vessels followed as did surveillance and harassment by land-based naval aircraft. 113/

Again, though, Moscow did not go out on a limb. The above reinforcement was made after it was clear that the U.S. deployments were symbolic and not preparatory to violent retaliation against North Korea. The Johnson administration was also by then in the midst of responding to the Tet offensive in South Vietnam. In short, this major Soviet naval deployment was wholly symbolic and virtually free of risk; a show, not a demonstration of resolve. It also may have been staged very reluctantly. It is difficult to infer an intent in the Kremlin to encourage Pyongyang to undertake affairs of this sort; what seems more likely is a conclusion in Moscow that to turn a deaf ear to North Korea would unacceptably reinforce the USSR's Vietnam-related image of being unwilling to defend its non-European allies against the United States. From this perspective, North Korea may also have benefited particularly from the logic of the Sino-Soviet conflict.

When a year later North Korean aircraft shot down a U.S. Navy EC-121 aircraft and a U.S. task force including four aircraft carriers and 20 other warships plus land-based combat aircraft were deployed to the area, the naval force was met by only a surveillance group of three destroyers and three intelligence-gathering vessels. Moreover, previous to this U.S. arrival into the Sea of Japan two Soviet destroyers were deployed to assist

the U.S. search and rescue effort. 114/ Soviet naval reconnaissance aircraft that surveilled the U.S. warships also did not engage in harassing activities. Aside from being concerned to show Pyongyang that the USSR would not allow itself to be regularly entrapped, Moscow may also have been particularly concerned to maintain reasonable relations with the United States at this time. The Ussuri River clashes with China had occurred just a month earlier and the USSR plainly did not want to chance a superpower crisis at this moment. Another sign of this order was a concurrent relaxation of Soviet military control in Czechoslovakia. Soviet military units did not make any show of force in aid of Pyongyang in 1976 after North Korean soldiers murdered two U.S. Army officers in the Demilitarized Zone and U.S. forces in Northeast Asia were again built up and threatened North Korea. 115/

#### Air Support for Cuba

The USSR has directed a political-military demonstration at the United States on behalf of a communist ally once since the 1972 Easter offensive in South Vietnam. This action took the form of a low-keyed transfer of a number of Soviet pilots to Cuba in early 1978 when Cuba and the USSR were heavily involved in the Ethiopian-Somalian conflict. 116/

By the spring of 1978 Cuba had deployed in Africa (principally in Ethiopia and Angola) approximately 39,000 military personnel or more than one-fifth of its armed forces. Cuban ground forces in Ethiopia were supported by Cuban pilots flying Soviet supplied aircraft. 117/ Although Cuba was not about to be attacked by the United States, a significant shortage of air force pilots was an understandable concern. The appearance

of Soviet pilots in Cuba was at the same time a demonstration of Soviet solidarity with the Castro regime and helped reinforce Havana's alliance with Moscow and Cuba's willingness and ability to intervene in distant regional arenas. It was also a highly visible symbol for both Fidel Castro and his cohorts and the Cuban people who may have felt somewhat exposed as a result of the lesser number of Cuban military men in Cuba and the increased hostility of the United States in consequence to Havana's African adventures. Possibly, too, Castro and the Kremlin may also have meant to deter a U.S. show of force in the Caribbean or, anticipating one, sought to reduce its impact upon Cuban attitudes. Surely the United States was in mind in some way insofar as the subject was the air defense of Cuba. Whatever the particular case, this was a no-risk way for Moscow to reinforce its relationship with Havana.

#### Defending An Ally Against China

In the late 1970s the U.S. threat to Cuba and other communist allies of the USSR paled in comparison to the danger posed by China to Vietnam. After the collapse of anti-communist regimes in Cambodia and South Vietnam in 1975, Hanoi moved into closer alliance with Moscow for balance against China and Phnom Penh leaned toward Peking to countervail a united Vietnam. Moscow could appreciate Hanoi's domination of Laos and prospective influence in Southeast Asia as a strategic weight upon China, but it did not relish the outbreak of heavy fighting between Vietnam and Kampuchea in late 1977. The spectacle of conflict between "two fraternal peoples" was exceedingly distasteful and Moscow worried that only the United States and China would gain from the violence which

continued into early 1978. 118/ Although Soviet statements plainly favored Vietnam, the Kremlin avoided a show of military support for Hanoi and sought a peaceful resolution of this "dangerous situation." 119/

The fighting did not end quickly, however. Instead of suing for peace or accepting a Hanoi proposal for a settlement after Vietnamese troops withdrew from Kampuchea in early 1978, Phnom Penh ordered attacks upon border areas in Vietnam. Relations between Vietnam and China deteriorated even further when Peking gave its full support to Kampuchea. For this Peking was progressively taxed in the form of increasingly harsh treatment and the forced exit of ethnic Chinese from Vietnam, Hanoi's acquisition of greater Soviet aid and full membership in COMECON, and finally a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between Moscow and Hanoi. Going down the spiral, Peking cut off aid to Vietnam, curtailed freight shipments from the USSR to Vietnam through China, and began sending fighter aircraft into Vietnamese airspace. Chinese forces in the Sino-Vietnamese border area were also built up and increasingly serious clashes ensued between Chinese and Vietnamese military personnel.

Notwithstanding the Kremlin's strong political backing and material support of Hanoi, Soviet armed forces remained out of the picture through 1978, with two exceptions. First, in early June, following reports of fighting between Vietnamese and Chinese border troops a Soviet task force including two cruisers and two destroyers exercised in the Bashi Channel between Taiwan and the Philippines. 120/ Possibly this was a long-scheduled maneuver unrelated to current events. Some in Tokyo took this

presence to be an element of warning against Japan's signing a treaty normalizing relations with China. At the same time, Soviet forces were carrying out an apparent political-military action in the Kuriles and the Bashi Channel was a good place from which to illustrate the vulnerability of Japanese commerce with Eurasia. Peking, though, linked the naval maneuvers to its conflict with Vietnam, and insofar as Moscow could not but expect this inference, to at least that extent the Kremlin appeared to be practicing gunboat diplomacy against China. Besides serving as a general warning to Peking and show of support to Hanoi, Moscow may have been particularly concerned to deter a Chinese seizure of the disputed, and Vietnamese-held, Spratley Islands or the unauthorized evacuation of overseas Chinese from Vietnam.

Then in mid-August, following a further escalation in the border strife, Moscow mounted an airlift to Vietnam that included a number of flights by military transport planes. 121/ Staged from Soviet Russia via Afghanistan, Pakistan and India, these flights did not provide a major resupply of Vietnamese civilian or military stores. However, they did serve as a further demonstration of Soviet alliance with Vietnam to both Hanoi and Peking.

Soviet armed forces were used in two ways to delimit Chinese military operations when Peking set upon an invasion of Vietnam after Vietnamese forces took over Kampuchea in late 1978-early 1979. During visits to the United States and Japan in January-February 1979 Deputy Prime Minister Teng Hsiao-p'ing publicly telegraphed China's intent to take some substantial yet bounded military action against Vietnam in order to teach

Hanoi a "lesson." The frequent reiteration of this theme and movement of Chinese forces to the Vietnamese border left little uncertainty. For Moscow to have then taken very strong measures to deter Peking against any military action directed at Vietnam would have required acceptance of a serious risk of war with China which, even if it could have been contained and brought to a halt quickly, would nevertheless have left a swath of destruction to Soviet relationships globally. The West might then have moved into even tighter alliance with China, NATO might have been reborn, Japanese rearmament might have been catalyzed, and SALT II might have been dealt a deathblow; nor would the third world have been pleased; and this was in addition to the possibility of large-scale conventional, and even nuclear, war. Moscow did not have an interest in risking so much on behalf of a quite independent ally. To think otherwise, moreover, was to allow the strategic interests of the USSR to be hostage to Vietnamese decisions.

At the same time, though, Peking was attuned to Moscow's interest in Vietnam and plainly believed it could provoke the USSR by incautious behavior. Soviet armed forces were orchestrated to insure this prudence. In particular, they were used to signal Moscow's understanding that the incursion by Chinese forces should not reach as far as Hanoi and should be limited in its duration. Secondly, these Soviet actions were meant to strengthen Vietnamese self-confidence and confidence in its alliance with the USSR and to provide Hanoi practical support during the conflict.

Had Moscow intended to deter Peking against all military action against Vietnam it might have issued a blunt or other very serious verbal

warning—that is, an ultimatum—or orchestrated some sizable exercises in Soviet Asia, or both, before China struck. It did neither. Instead, about ten days after Peking opened hostilities fifteen Pacific Fleet naval vessels including two cruisers and a number of intelligence gatherers were concentrated in the Gulf of Tonkin and South China Sea. Besides being a visible sign of support to Vietnam, these ships also were able to serve the practical purposes of 1) gaining electronic intelligence for Vietnamese commanders; and 2) cautioning against Chinese actions aimed at severing Vietnam's sea links or grabbing the Spratley Islands. Rather than constitute a general deterrent to Peking, this presence marked a preparation for coming conflict.

Article six of the November 1978 Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between the USSR and Vietnam reads: "In case either party is attacked or threatened with attack, the two parties signatory to the treaty shall immediately consult each other with a view to eliminating that threat, and shall take appropriate and effective measures to safeguard peace and the security of the two countries." <sup>122/</sup> On February 18, the day after China attacked Vietnam, a Soviet government statement related that the USSR would "honor" these obligations and called upon Peking "to stop before it is too late." <sup>123/</sup> In the days ahead this last phrase was mouthed repeatedly by Soviet commentators and political leaders. The government statement on the 18th also said, though, that "the heroic Vietnamese people, which has become victim of a fresh aggression, is capable of standing up for itself this time again...." <sup>124/</sup>

In short, Vietnam was on its own for a time. During the next several

days this latter message was confirmed in a number of private comments by Soviet officials to Western and Asian diplomats. The USSR did not intend to engage in conflict or even a military confrontation with China while it could assume that the scale of hostilities would remain limited, that an assault on Hanoi would not be made, and that Peking would soon order a withdrawal. 125/

However, to demonstrate its concern and continuing support for Hanoi, a few days after China launched its attack the Kremlin took a number of low-keyed military measures: the Admiral Senyavin, flagship of the Pacific Fleet, was dispatched from the Sea of Japan to the South China Sea; naval aircraft began long-range reconnaissance flights to the area of fighting; and a small airlift was carried out from the western USSR via Turkey (or Iran), Iraq and India. The warships deployed and reconnaissance aircraft allowed a substantial intelligence-gathering capability, while command and control facilities at sea could direct both transport and surveillance flights and monitor airborne gained intelligence. Although Japanese reports of Soviet troop movements in Mongolia and areas bordering Sinkiang remained unconfirmed, they were not implausible. 126/ China was not likely to react violently to such Soviet action and Moscow did want to confirm Peking's original intent to act with constraint. In fact, Peking was quite willing to assuage Moscow's anxiety. When asked about the duration of China's military action on February 21, Chinese Vice Premier Keng Piao responded: "about another week, maybe a little more but not very much more." 127/ Two days later Teng Hsiao-p'ing reiterated that Chinese troops would withdraw from Vietnam once "the objectives of the counterattack have been attained." 128/



Ten days after the Chinese intervention Moscow did show signs of some exasperation, but its reasoned intent to avoid conflict with China remained firm. Speaking in Minsk on February 26, Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko said: "The Soviet Union resolutely demands that the Beijing [Peking] leadership end before it is too late and I repeat, before it is too late, the aggression against the Socialist Republic of Vietnam..."

(italics added). <sup>129/</sup> The italicized words were omitted in the reported version of the speech. What is of further interest, a major statement carried by Tass February 28 did not include at all the litany, "before it is too late." <sup>130/</sup> Moreover, the Pravda version used the words "China's incursion" in place of "China's aggression." <sup>131/</sup> Interestingly, the Tass communication was filed ten hours after an Agence France Presse report of remarks by Teng Hsiao-p'ing in which the Vice Premier said: "We estimate that the Soviet Union will not take too big an action, but if they should really come, there's nothing we can do about it, but we are prepared against that." <sup>132/</sup> At this point Moscow may have been concerned to avoid comments that might draw the USSR into a tense confrontation seriously risking conflict with China.

Several days later, however, a threatening stance was taken in an article in BILD (a Hamburg tabloid) by Soviet journalist Victor Louis who is widely regarded as a conduit of official Soviet thinking. "Will the Soviet Union intervene militarily in Indochina to help its ally Vietnam against the Chinese?," Louis asked rhetorically. His answer: "In my opinion there is hardly any doubt that the Soviet Government will not let the matter rest with sharp words and threats unless China ends the war as quickly as possible." <sup>133/</sup>

If Moscow was signalling its preparedness to take stronger action if a withdrawal was not ordered, it was still giving Peking several more days and only went as far as to say it would intervene in Indochina. No special Soviet military activity in the Sino-Soviet border area was reported at this time and a new Soviet government statement that day (March 2) was highly ambiguous. "The Soviet Union," its operative portion read,

considers it necessary to state with all certainty: China's actions cannot leave indifferent those who have a genuine interest in insuring the security of peoples and preserving peace.

Chinese troops must immediately be withdrawn from the confines of Vietnam and military demonstrations on the borders of Laos and preparations for an incursion into this country must be stopped. The Chinese aggressors should know that the more crimes they commit, the more severely they will have to pay for them. 134/

Moreover, a major speech by General Secretary Brezhnev also that day was exceedingly constrained. 135/ As a statement of intent this last communication allowed a conclusion that the USSR remained unwilling to undertake any violent action against China. More likely, though, the Louis article and the new government statement were meant to remind Peking of the risk it would run if it did not keep to a schedule in line with Keng Piao's earlier forecast and to caution Peking against substituting Laos as a scene of conflict or widening the conflict into that nation. Rather than try to push Moscow further and having other reasons to pull back as well, Peking offered a new reassurance the following day and, two days after that, ordered a withdrawal. 136/

After Chinese troops began to depart Vietnam a Soviet landing ship able to carry several hundred troops departed for Vietnam accompanied by a destroyer. About a week later, this ship and Soviet transport aircraft engaged in redeploying Vietnamese troops and equipment from southern to

northern Vietnam. 137/ Visits by a Soviet cruiser, submarine and intelligence-gathering vessels to Da Nang and Cam Ranh Bay also were reported; and, for the first time, maritime reconnaissance aircraft patrolling from the USSR, rather than return to a base in the Soviet Far East, landed in Vietnam. Although the Soviet navy had good operational reasons to utilize facilities in Vietnam, these activities also may have been meant as a caution to Peking against directing new violence at Vietnam, for Hanoi afforded Peking no conciliation on the issues between them.

In the light of past Soviet behavior and particularly Hanoi's own experience during the second Indochina war when the United States was the enemy, it would be foolish to conclude that the Vietnamese were shocked by the absence of Soviet political-military action that might seriously have been aimed at deterring a Chinese attack or limiting its duration and objectives much more narrowly. If Hanoi did nevertheless hope for greater support, it also could not help but recognize that, as in 1965-72 and like North Korea, Cuba and China in the past, the general threat presented by the USSR and uncertainty about Soviet behavior was essential to the limits Peking did observe and was of continuing importance to the security of Vietnam. This dependency, which continues to assure Vietnamese political alliance to the USSR, lessens the pressure upon the USSR to use armed forces on behalf of Hanoi--at least while the survival of that regime is not in serious question; which is not to say that if Peking determined to take over Vietnam as Hanoi took over Kampuchea, the USSR would necessarily go to war with China.

Footnotes

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12. Ibid., pp. 171-80.
13. New York Times, July 4, 7, 10 and 11, 1948.

14. Stavro Skendi, Albania (Frederick A. Praeger, 1956), pp. 116-118.
15. Brzezinski, The Soviet Bloc, pp. 15-16; Hugh Seton-Watson, The East European Revolution (Frederick A. Praeger, 1951), pp. 91, 211-19.
16. New York Times, December 4, 16 and 18, 1947; Seton-Watson, The East European Revolution, p. 218. Air units were deployed to Bulgaria in 1953 following a buildup of airpower in Greece and Turkey, both NATO members. Soviet ground force units were reported to have returned temporarily to Bulgaria in November 1956, as a precautionary action while the uprising in Hungary was being suppressed. New York Times, October 12, 1953 and November 19, 1956.
17. Raymond L. Garthoff, "The Soviet Intervention in Manchuria, 1945-46," in Garthoff, Sino-Soviet Military Relations, pp. 60-62; Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence, pp. 394-95.
18. Garthoff, "The Soviet Intervention in Manchuria, 1945-46," pp. 67-68; J.M. Mackintosh, "The Soviet Army in the Far East, 1942-1955," in Liddell Hart, The Soviet Army, pp. 178-79; Ian V. Hogg, "The War Against Japan," in Mayer, The Russian War Machine, 1917-1945, pp. 238-42.
19. Gregory Henderson, Korea: The Politics of the Vortex (Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 325-26; Rinn-Sup Shinn and others, Area Handbook for North Korea (GPO, 1969), pp. 54-55. Robert R. Simmons, The Strained Alliance: Peking, Pyongyang, Moscow and the Politics of the Korean Civil War (Free Press, 1975), pp. 25-28.

20. New York Times, December 31, 1948.
21. New York Times, March 2-4, 1946.
22. Garthoff, "The Soviet Intervention in Manchuria, 1945-46," pp. 71-76; O. Edmund Clubb, China and Russia: The Great Game (Columbia University Press, 1970), pp. 349-58; Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence, pp. 476-79.
23. New York Times, March 24, 1947 and October 23, 1948.
24. Ivo J. Lederer and Wayne S. Vucinich, eds., The Soviet Union and the Middle East: The Post World War II Era (Hoover Institution Press, 1974), p. 57.
25. New York Times, August 25, 1957; George Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs, (2d ed., Cornell University Press, 1956), pp. 176-83.
26. Considering this environment, Khrushchev's claim that Beria goaded Stalin into demanding the Turkish provinces of Kars and Ardahan may bear some truth. Nikita S. Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers: The Last Testament, ed. and trans. by Strobe Talbott (Little, Brown, 1974), pp. 295-96. On Turkey's behavior during World War II, see Ivar Spector, The Soviet Union and the Muslim World, 1917-1958 (University of Washington, mimeo, 1958), pp. 134-136.
27. U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1946, Volume 7: The Near East and Africa (GPO, 1969), pp. 342-43, 818-19. Current History (April, 1946), p. 366.

28. Log of the U.S.S. Missouri; U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1946, Volume 3: The Near East and Africa (GPO, 1969), p. 822; Stephen G. Xydis, "The Genesis of the Sixth Fleet," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, vol. 84 (August 1958), pp. 41-50.

29. The December 1943 treaty signed by Edward Benes, then head of the Czechoslovakian government in exile, remained in effect after Czechoslovakia was liberated and the 1948 coup. The Federal Republic of Germany was constituted in 1949 and joined NATO in 1955.

30. "On Guard Over Peace and Security of Our Motherland," Pravda, February 23, 1951, in Current Digest of the Soviet Press (hereafter CDS), vol. 3 (April 7, 1951), p. 27.

31. Malcolm Mackintosh, "The Evolution of the Warsaw Pact," Adelphi Papers, no. 58 (International Institute for Strategic Studies, June 1969), pp. 1-4; Robin A. Remington, The Warsaw Pact: Case Studies in Communist Conflict Resolution (MIT Press, 1971), pp. 10-23.

32. For example, see the statement by Marshal of the Soviet Union V. Kulikov on the twenty-second anniversary of the pact. "Standing Guard Over Peace and Socialism," Krasnaya zvezda, May 14, 1977, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (May 19, 1977), pp. D1-4.

33. New York Times, March 31 and December 28, 1951; Skendi, Albania, pp. 116-18.

34. J.M. Mackintosh, Strategy and Tactics of Soviet Foreign Policy (Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 77-78.



35. Walther Hubatsh, The German Question: A Documentary (Herder Book Center, 1967), pp. 184-85. Also see David Childs, East Germany (Praeger, 1969), p. 230.

36. Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 1955-1956, p. 14967; New York Times, June 30-July 2, 1956.

37. Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 1971-1972, p. 24390.

38. Ibid.; New York Times, December 20, 1970.

39. Christopher D. Jones, "The Soviet Union and Soviet-American Relations: Restraints on the Use of Soviet Armed Forces," in House International Relations Committee, The Soviet Union: Internal Dynamics of Foreign Policy, Present and Future (GPO, 1978), p. 163.

40. Vladimir Dedijer, The Battle Stalin Lost: Memoirs of Yugoslavia 1948-1953 (Viking, 1970), pp. 212-14; Philip J. Windsor, "Yugoslavia 1951 and Czechoslovakia, 1968," in Blechman and Kaplan, Force Without War, p. 446. At one point a Soviet warship also entered Yugoslav territorial waters on the Danube. New York Times, August 28, 1948.

41. Brzezinski, The Soviet Bloc, p. 55.

42. U. S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1949, Vol. 5: Eastern Europe (GPO, 1976), pp. 940-41.

43. New York Times, September 25, 1951.

44. Keesing's Contemporary Archives 1974, p. 26788.

45. New York Times, September 29, October 4 and November 6, 1974.
46. On the events leading to the October crisis in Poland, see Richard Hiscocks, Poland, Bridge for the Abyss: An Interpretation of Developments in Post-War Poland (Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 170-209.
47. Material on Soviet political and military actions during this crisis is drawn from Michel Tatu's extended analysis in chapter six of this study; also see Ibid., pp. 210-21.
48. Data on Soviet behavior during the Hungarian Revolution are drawn from chapter six of this study as well as from Mackintosh, Strategy and Tactics, pp. 165-78; Noel Barber, Seven Days of Freedom: The Hungarian Uprising 1956 (Stein and Day, 1974); Melvin J. Lasky, The Hungarian Revolution: A White Book (Frederick A. Praeger, 1957).
49. New York Times, October 27-November 19, 1956.
50. Philip Windsor and Adam Roberts, Czechoslovakia, 1968: Reform, Regression and Resistance (Columbia University Press, 1969), pp. 18-37.
51. Cited in Jiri Valenta, "The Bureaucratic Politics Paradigm and the Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia," Political Science Quarterly, vol. 94 (Spring 1979), p. 66. On the course of political developments in Czechoslovakia and Soviet and Eastern European reactions, see Windsor and Roberts, Czechoslovakia, 1968, pp. 37-104; Robin A. Remington, Winter in Prague: Documents on Czechoslovak Communism in Crisis (MIT Press, 1969), pp. 141-287.

52. On the tactics of the intervention and for further details see Michel Tatu's discussion in chapter six. Also see Wolfe, Soviet Power in Europe, 1945-1970, p. 469.

53. Ibid., p. 479; Windsor and Roberts report "two main items of discussion at Dresden: the coordination of economic planning among the members of the Comecon, and the confrontation of Western Germany." Czechoslovakia, 1968, p. 25.

54. New York Times, May 10 and 11, 1968.

55. Wolfe, Soviet Power and Europe, 1945-1970, p. 480.

56. Robert G. Weinland, "The State and Future of the Soviet Navy in the North Atlantic," in Michael McGwire and John McDonnell, eds., Soviet Naval Influence: Domestic and Foreign Dimensions (Praeger, 1977), p. 419.

57. Windsor, "Yugoslavia 1951 and Czechoslovakia 1958," p. 483.

58. As quoted in Ibid., p. 491.

59. New York Times, August 31, 1968.

60. Keessing's Contemporary Archives, 1971, p. 24933; New York Times, November 28, 1971.

61. Brzezinski, The Soviet Bloc, p. 110.

62. S. Kovalev, "Sovereignty and the International Duties of Socialist Countries," Pravda, September 26, 1968, in Rubinstein, The Foreign Policy of the Soviet Union, pp. 302-03.

63. This statement was made on October 3, 1968 and is presented in Thomas M. Franck and Edward Weisband, Word Politics: Verbal Strategy Among the Superpowers (Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 34.

64. Robin Edmonds, Soviet Foreign Policy, 1962-1973: The Paradox of Super Power (Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 74.

65. Grechko, On Guard for Peace and the Building of Communism, p. 79.

66. Mackintosh, "The Evolution of the Warsaw Pact," pp. 4, 16.

67. This incident is discussed in chapter five.

68. Although Moscow offered no protective reply to this U.S. show of force, it was also clear that the United States had nothing further in mind if Belgrade exercised restraint, which it did.

69. U. S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States 1949, Vol. 7: The Far East and Australasia, Part 2 (GPO, 1976), p. 974.

70. Thus, for example, "in a pact concluded 17 March 1949, the Soviet Union agreed to provide necessary arms and equipment for six Infantry Divisions and three Mechanized 'Units'," etc... Ibid., p. 1049; Nikita S. Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers, ed. and trans. by Strobe Talbott (Little, Brown, and Co., 1970), p. 369. It is also possible that Soviet air force units remained in North Korea after the Red Army was withdrawn in 1948.

71. Khrushchev Remembers, p. 370 With the official U. S. Army history in mind, this statement by Khrushchev leads to the conclusion that up to

3,000 Soviet military men were withdrawn; as cited in Alexander L. George and Richard Smoke, Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice (Columbia University Press, 1974), p. 175.

72. Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers, p. 370.

73. New York Times, October 10 and 20, 1950.

74. U. S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States 1950, Volume 7; Korea (GPO, 1976), p. 159.

75. Simmons, The Strained Alliance, pp. 119-24.

76. Robert P. Berman, Soviet Air Power in Transition (Brookings Institution, 1978), p. 60; and other materials acquired by Robert P. Berman. Also see General William W. Momyer, USAF Ret., Air Power in Three Wars (U.S. Department of the Air Force, 1977), p. 114. The 1951 U.S. intelligence estimate is taken from Simmons, The Strained Alliance, p. 202.

77. U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950, Vol. 7: Korea (GPO, 1976), p. 1025, 1189; Roy E. Appleman, United States Army in the Korean War: South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu (Department of the Army, Office of the Chief of Military History, 1961), pp. 486-87; New York Times, January 18, 1951; Pravda, April 7, 1979, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (April 9, 1979), p. B2; B. Fononaryov and others, History of Soviet Foreign Policy, 1945-1970 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1973), p. 196.

78. "On Guard Over Security of Mighty Soviet Homeland," Pravda, February 23, 1955, in CDSF, vol. 7 (April 6, 1955), p. 4; Arnold L. Horelick and Myron Rush, Strategic Power and Soviet Foreign Policy (University of Chicago Press, 1966), pp. 17-18.

79. "May Day Parade and Demonstration of Working People in Red Square," Pravda, May 2, 1958, in CDSF, vol. 10 (June 11, 1958), p. 17.

80. Data on U.S. military activities are drawn from U.S. Navy Historical Center, Operational Archives, "Short of War" Documentation; and M.H. Halperin, The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis: A Documented History, no. RM-4900-ISA (RAND, December 1966).

81. Halperin, The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, pp. 230, 232, 236.

82. Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers: The Last Testament, pp. 261-62.

83. John R. Thomas, "The Quemoy Crisis of 1958," in Garthoff, Sino-Soviet Military Relations, p. 142.

84. Pravda, August 31, 1958, cited in Halperin, The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, p. 167; New York Times, August 31, 1958.

85. Cited by Halperin, The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis, p. 219.

86. Ibid., p. 315.

87. Ibid., p. 324.

88. Ibid., p. 402.

89. Cited in A. Doak Barnett, China and the Major Powers in East Asia (Brookings Institution, 1977), p. 344.

90. "On Guard Over Building of Communism," Pravda, February 22, 1959, in CDSP, vol. 11 (March 25, 1959), p. 12.

91. "On Guard Over Peace," Pravda, February 23, 1960, in CDSP, vol. 12 (March 23, 1960), p. 14.

92. See A.N. Kosygin's Revolution Day 1962 report. Pravda, November 7, 1962, in CDSP, vol. 14 (December 5, 1962), p. 7. Also see R. Ya. Malinovsky, Vigilantly Stand Guard Over the Peace, p. 29.

93. See Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence, pp. 668-69; Michel Tatu, Power in the Kremlin: From Khrushchev to Kosygin (Viking, 1967), pp. 230-33; and Andres Suarez, Cuba: Castroism and Communism, 1959-1966 (MIT Press, 1967), pp. 163-64.

94. Keessing's Contemporary Archives, 1961-1962, pp. 19057-58.

95. Ibid., pp. 19060-61.

96. Herbert Y. Schandler, The Unmaking of a President: Lyndon Johnson and Vietnam (Princeton University Press, 1977), p. 352.

97. "Aggressive Actions by U.S.A. in Gulf of Tonkin," Pravda, August 6, 1964, in CDSP, vol. 16 (September 2, 1964), pp. 25-26; Donald S. Zagoria, Vietnam Triangle: Moscow, Peking, Hanoi (Pegasus, 1967), pp. 43-45.

98. The Senator Gravel Edition, The Pentagon Papers, vol. 3 (Beacon Press, 1971), pp. 133, 194-95.
99. Pravda, November 7, 1964, in CDSP, vol. 16 (November 18, 1964), p. 8.
100. Soviet government statement, Pravda, February 9, 1965 and Izvestiya, February 10, 1965, in CDSP, vol. 7 (March 3, 1965), pp. 6-7.
101. Moscow Domestic Service, in FBIS, Daily Report: USSR and Eastern Europe (February 23, 1965), p. CC7.
102. "New Adventures of American Aggressors," Pravda, March 10, 1965, in CDSP, vol. 17 (March 31, 1965), pp. 22-23. Also see Party Chairman Brezhnev's statement on Victory Day, "Great Victory of the Soviet People," Pravda, May 9, 1965, in CDSP, vol. 17 (May 26, 1965), pp. 3-12; and William E. Griffith, Sino-Soviet Relations, 1964-1965 (MIT Press, 1967), pp. 70, 74.
103. William B. Ballis, "Relations Between the USSR and Vietnam," Studies on the Soviet Union, vol. 6, no. 2, 1966, p. 55; The Pentagon Papers, vol. 3, pp. 280, 284, 286.
104. The Observer, November 14, 1965. For confirmation that some proposal was put forward, see the comment in 1978 by a Pravda political observer, over Moscow Domestic Service, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (September 6, 1978), p. C3.
105. Pravda, March 24, 1965, in CDSP, vol. 17 (April 14, 1965), p. 15; Pravda, April 18, 1965, in CDSP, vol. 17 (May 12, 1965), p. 13.



106. This would fit in with John Erickson's suggestion in Soviet Military Power, Report 73-1, (United States Strategic Institute, 1973), p. 112. Also, at the 23d CPSU Congress in March-April 1966 General of the Army A.A. Yepishev told listeners that "the personnel of whole (Soviet military) units are reporting their readiness to go to Vietnam." Had this remark complemented other rhetoric in this line, it might have implied something more than requisite enthusiasm by the chief of the Main Political Administration of the Soviet armed forces. It stood alone, however. The operative policy of the USSR was presented at the Congress in the form of a cautiously worded "Statement....Concerning U.S. Agression in Vietnam." See "Address to the XXIII Congress of the CPSU" by General of the Army A.A. Yepishev in William R. Kintner and Harriet Fast Scott, The Nuclear Revolution in Soviet Military Affairs (University of Oklahoma Press, 1968), p. 294; 23d Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Novosti Press Agency-Moscow, 1966), pp. 425-28.

107. Moscow Domestic Service, FBIS, Daily Report: USSR and Eastern Europe (November 7, 1966), p. CC14.

108. Abram N. Shulsky, "Coercive Diplomacy," in Bradford Dismukes and James McConnell, eds., Soviet Naval Diplomacy: From the June War to Angola (Pergamon, forthcoming), chapter 4; New York Times, April 29, May 10, and May 17, 1972; Michael McGwire, "Changing Naval Operations and Military Intervention," Naval War College Review, vol. 29 (Spring 1977), p. 21.

109. Richard M. Nixon, RN: The Memoirs of Richard Nixon (Grosset and Dunlop, 1978), pp. 591, 607.

116. Christian Science Monitor, April 25, 1978; International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance, 1977-78 (IISS, 1977), p. 69.

117. In July 1969 a seven ship Soviet naval squadron visited Cuba for a week in a demonstration of Soviet-Cuban solidarity after a period of difficult relations between the two nations. This deployment included exercises in the Gulf of Mexico and preceded by less than two weeks a visit by President Nixon to Rumania, but it was not related to any current confrontation going on or new hostility directed at Cuba by the United States. Thereafter Soviet naval vessels paid regular visits to Cuba. On the 1969 visit, see New York Times, July 8, 15, 20 and 21, 1969.

118. Tass report, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (January 5, 1978), p. L1; and Moscow Radio Peace and Progress, in Ibid., vol. 3 (January 7, 1978), p. L5.

119. Pravda, January 8, 1978, in Ibid., vol. 3 (January 12, 1978), p. A2.

120. Christian Science Monitor, June 9, 1978.

121. Washington Post, September 2, 1978.

122. Pravda, November 4, 1978, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (November 6, 1978), p. L9.

123. See Moscow Tass, February 18, 1979, in Ibid., vol. 3 (February 21, 1979), p. L1.

124. Ibid.
125. New York Times, February 23, 1979.
126. Wall Street Journal, February 23, 1979.
127. Agence France Presse, February 23, 1979, in FBIS, Daily Report: People's Republic of China, vol. 1 (February 26, 1979), p. A6.
128. Ibid., p. A7.
129. See FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union (Supplement), vol. 3 (February 27, 1979), pp. 52, 56.
130. See Ibid., vol. 3 (February 28, 1979), p. C1.
131. Ibid., vol. 3 (March 1, 1979), p. C1.
132. FBIS, Daily Report: People's Republic of China, vol. 1 (February 27, 1979), p. A7.
133. FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (March 5, 1979), p. C2.
134. Moscow Tass in Ibid., p. C1.
135. For these comments by Brezhnev, see Moscow Tass text, in Ibid., vol. 3 (March 5, 1979), p. R5-6.
136. See comment by Vice Foreign Minister Ho Ying, on March 3, 1979, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (March 5, 1979), p. A5.
137. New York Times, March 7 and 16, 1979.

## Chapter 4

### THE SECURITY OF THE REVOLUTION AND HOMELAND

While the USSR has used armed forces to create and maintain a position of dominance in Eastern Europe and to support the security of communist allies elsewhere, Moscow has also perceived serious threats by foreign powers to the security of the USSR and used military diplomacy to forestall or otherwise meet these dangers. Soviet security concerns and the Kremlin's strong reactions and often provocation cannot be comprehended properly without an understanding of early Soviet history as well as the impact upon the USSR of World War II. Because of its historical experiences and the ideological beliefs of the Bolsheviks and their successors, national defense has been an especially salient concern in the USSR.

Things might be different if Russians could be told only about invasions by Teutonic knights and Tartars in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, Poles in the seventeenth century, and Napoleon--that is, destructive wars not within modern memory and for which Czarist counterparts can be found. The First World War, the Russian Civil War and World War II updated this list, however, and left as a legacy to Soviet citizens the belief that their nation could be invaded and destroyed. Other frightening experiences within recall are threats presented along the Chinese borderlands in the 1920s and 1930s, and the aggressiveness of Japan against the Soviet Far East prior to the Second World War. Soviet auth-

orities, both civilian and military, who have themselves retained these memories, have also used them as a historical foundation justifying unyielding attention to the Soviet armed forces' most important mission--defending the Revolution and homeland. 1/

#### Early Experiences

Soviet history, as it is known in the USSR, begins with the October Revolution of 1917 and the Civil War that ensued almost immediately. 2/ One of the Bolsheviks' first objectives after seizing power was a peace agreement with Germany and withdrawal from the First World War. The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in March 1917 ending hostilities on the eastern front resulted in the western members of the Entente, principally Great Britain and France, but also including the United States, intervening in support of the Bolsheviks' antagonists--the Whites--in the Civil War that lasted into the 1920s. In addition to sending arms, ammunition and other war materiel, thousands of Western troops fought or otherwise cooperated with the Whites in virtually all theaters of the conflict. Although the allies' initial objective was to reopen the eastern front, the end of World War I in November 1917 did not lead to the Western military units' withdrawal or an end to their support of the anti-Bolshevik forces. 3/

The Bolsheviks and their successors have always believed that the Civil War was fought against counter-revolution and imperialism, these forces seeking to snuff out the light of progress and restore the old order. The most formidable danger was world imperialism.

Politburo member, Defense Minister and Marshal of the Soviet Union A. A. Grechko wrote not long before his death in 1976: "the young Republic of Soviets was in a fiery ring of fronts...the chief danger was foreign military intervention...All reactionary forces united under the banner of anti-Sovietism...[with] a common goal of crushing the power of the Soviets, and restoring capitalism in Russia." 4/ "Soviet Russia was invaded by some fifteen countries, including the United States, in order to strangle the revolution and restore the old order, said Leonid Brezhnev in 1979. 5/

The Civil War and particularly the Allied intervention left as its legacy to the new rulers of Russia a mentality of encirclement, isolation and ruling under siege in an alien and hostile world. 6/ Relaxation could not be afforded; remaining on guard was a necessity. To assume that the new Soviet state could ever be accepted by a capitalist world was a delusion, and to act on this basis was to invite aggression. "Never...forget we are surrounded by a capitalist world," Stalin advised. 7/ Continued military preparedness being requisite, ninety percent of the regular army or approximately one-half million troops remained guarding Soviet frontiers after the end of the Civil War. 8/

A potentially serious threat to the Soviet Far East was presented following the overthrow of the warlord government in north China in 1928 and alliance of Manchuria with the Nationalist government of Chiang Kai-shek in Nanking. The Chinese then began to

question Russian imperial privileges obtained by the Czars and moved troops up to the Soviet-Manchuria border. Moscow also reinforced its position and established a Special Far Eastern Army headquartered at Khabarovsk. In October-November 1929, after Soviet troop strength in the area had been increased from 34,000 to 113,000, Soviet ground and air units and the Amur Flotilla destroyed the Chinese military threat in northern Manchuria. These victories and the continuing threat Soviet forces presented to Manchuria compelled the Chinese to sign, in December 1929 in Khabarovsk, a protocol accepting the Soviet position. 9/

The Mukden incident in 1931 and Japan's establishment of the puppet state of Manchukuo a year later further increased Soviet security concerns in Central Asia and the Far East. In 1934 Soviet ground and air units intervened against a Japanese supported Chinese force in Sinkiang; Soviet units penetrated hundreds of miles into Chinese territory in this instance. (Soviet military men helped quell a revolt in Sinkiang in 1937.) 10/ In 1935 Moscow became especially concerned to reinforce its military position in Outer Mongolia. Tokyo not only seemed ready to take over this country; Japanese military forces, it was feared, were also prepared to cut the Trans-Siberian railway and attack the Soviet Far East. The test came in August 1939 when, after a number of small battles, a Soviet-Mongol force led by General G. K. Zhukov decisively defeated a large Japanese-Manchukuo force, the latter sustaining perhaps as many as 55,000 casualties. This action followed by days the massing of Japanese and Soviet divisions and

incidents in the USSR-Manchukuo-Korea border area around Changu-fung, where too the Soviet military and political position proved strongest. 11/

Between August 1937, when the USSR and the Nationalist government in China signed a treaty of nonaggression, and 1941 Moscow provided military support to China in its war against Japan. Arms, training officers, and other advisers were sent to aid China's defense. Also provided was large-scale combat air support including, by the end of 1939, more than 1,000 aircraft and the talents of perhaps more than 2,000 Soviet pilots. 12/ This participation in China's war against Japan ended only after Tokyo and Moscow signed their own nonaggression pact in 1941.

#### The Creation of West Germany

The Great Patriotic War of 1941-45 is clearly the other great event in Soviet history next to the Revolution and Civil War. Between June 1941, when Hitler launched Operation Barbarossa against Russia with a force of 3.3 million men, and May 1945 more than 20 million Russians were killed, and more than 70,000 towns and villages, and 1700 cities were subjected to the destruction of war. 13/ No nation, except perhaps Poland, suffered as greatly.

Not surprisingly, the principal foci of Soviet geostrategic interest after World War II were Eastern and Central Europe. Czechoslovakia, where the local communist party was popular was evacuated in late 1945 by the Red Army in conjunction with a similar withdrawal by the U.S. Army. Elsewhere in Eastern Europe, as was observed earlier, Soviet military power remained steadfast and was



used by Stalin to guarantee the consolidation of Soviet power. That issue over the future of Germany led Stalin to provoke the first great crisis of the cold war and that Soviet military power was turned to regularly for two decades thereafter as a means for influencing developments in West Germany and the status of West Berlin are comprehensible to Russians in the light of the Second World War and as actions to control the course of a nation capable of again becoming a great power, exerting a powerful influence on the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe, and, too, threatening the security of the USSR. Of further consternation from the Soviet perspective, West Germany became the client and ally of the United States, which after World War II was perceived in the USSR as the new leader of anti-Soviet forces in the world.

Of Soviet political-military policy in the transition from World War II to the Berlin blockade, a relatively clear picture is perceivable. In the context of the war the Red Army occupied vast amounts of territory around the USSR's frontiers. The immediate and legitimizing objective was the defeat of Germany and Japan; the longer-term political goal was to establish spheres of influence satisfying Soviet security and ideological interests and what may be termed something of an imperial imperative. But Europe was the primary theater of interest and where some risks were considered worth taking (Czechoslovakia and Berlin). Asia and the Near East were secondary, evidenced by the withdrawals from Iran and China and the concurrent retreat from pressure upon Turkey, all

following first signs of serious U.S. objection.

Even in Europe, though, Stalin was cautious and not imprudent. The creation of satellites was staged over several years; the Red Army initially withdrew from Czechoslovakia; and Yugoslavia was able to break away. The one great attempt to compel Western behavior--that is, the blockade--was carefully worked up to and controlled, and related to Germany, the place of greatest significance to Soviet security. Before considering the blockade, it is worth observing about Soviet priorities and sensitivity that Stalin elected not to sovietize the sector of Austria held by the Red Army and did not press Finland for anything beyond neutrality and acceptance of the territorial losses suffered in 1941 after the Winter War. Specific interests explaining these acts of restraint would seem to have been, respectively, Central Europe's neutralization and Sweden's remaining nonaligned.

The blockade of Berlin was linked most immediately to the Western allies' insistence on the economic rehabilitation of their zones of occupation in Germany and Berlin. More deeply at issue, though, was the future relationship of Germany between East and West, and the existence of a Western enclave deep within the Soviet sphere of influence. The firm alignment of France and Italy with the West in the spring of 1948, manifested by the electoral defeat of the Italian Communist Party in April 1948 and France's support of the U.S.-British position on Germany, probably indicated to the Kremlin the necessity for strong action to prevent the establishment of a unified western Germany and to obtain Western acceptance

of a strong Soviet voice and even veto of their zonal policies. The more limited objective apparent was to demonstrate the USSR's control over, if not the cession of, the western sectors of Berlin. The airlift allowed the West to evade the blockade, while the concurrent Western military build-up in Europe may have cautioned Stalin against further provocative action that he may have contemplated. 14/

Ever cautious, Stalin built up to the blockade slowly. Moscow first threatened to oust the West from Berlin in January 1948. Coupled with this threat, Soviet troops forced the return of a train carrying Germans from Berlin to the British occupation zone. Then from late March into April, Western air, rail, road and barge traffic was harassed. In response to these actions in January and March-April, Washington deployed in each instance a number of B-29 nuclear bombers to Germany as a signal of resolve and U.S. military power. More important, however, may have been the lack of an effective Western reaction to the coup in Czechoslovakia. New curbs were imposed on Western traffic with Berlin in early June, the complete surface blockade being inaugurated in mid-month.

In imposing the blockade Stalin left the next move to the West, however. No attempt was made to seriously interfere with the airlift, which was almost certainly expected in light of the Western recourse to this means in earlier months. The Soviets may, in fact, have been initially pleased about this activity, perceiving it as a safety valve allowing the West to come around slowly, which was perhaps preferable to the sudden shock to the West of

losing all physical communication with West Berlin. What surprised Moscow was the size of the airlift able to be mounted and its effectiveness. Stalin was also careful not to threaten the West with war; thus no Soviet divisions were massed on frontiers, nor were Soviet forces in Germany heavily reinforced.

Although major East-West crises over Soviet threats aimed directly at West Berlin and more generally at the status of West Germany did not occur again until 1958-59 and 1961, there was no absence of lesser confrontations in the interim. Not too long after the blockade was abandoned in the spring of 1949 the West began to discuss the subject of West German rearmament. Upsetting to many of Bonn's Western European neighbors, this talk mortified the Kremlin. In Adam Ulam's words: "To the Soviet Union, West German rearmament was the main danger to her post-war positions, and the prevention of such a contingency was a principal aim of her foreign policy. In retrospect it is not too much to say that a re-armed West Germany was considered a greater danger than the American monopoly or superiority in atomic weapons." 15/

One way that the Kremlin coped with this discussion, which was concluded on an affirmative note finally in 1954, was to turn the screw on West Berlin. As related to a number of specific curves in the road toward West German rearmament, western aircraft were buzzed by Soviet aircraft in the corridors between West Berlin and West Germany; autobahn, rail and barge traffic was harassed and at times blocked; threatening military deployments were made; and pointed exercises were held. Like the blockade, though, these

actions were carefully controlled. To cite a few examples: In the summer of 1951 a squadron of Soviet jet aircraft overflew Tempelhof airport in West Berlin after Chancellor Adenauer disclosed his government's plan to establish a 250,000 man army and Bonn signed a proposal for a European army that included provision for German equality. 16/ Five months later the enclave was subjected to a series of infringements on its traffic with the West seemingly in response to the combination of 1) President Truman's and Prime Minister Churchill's backing of the European Defense Community and its inclusion of German military power; 2) a NATO agreement to support the development of a 1,000 plane-plus GFR tactical air force; and 3) Chancellor Adenauer's demand for West Germany's full inclusion in NATO. 17/ The last scene in this act took the form of a series of Soviet fighter aircraft attacks upon British military and civilian aircraft in March 1953, just after Stalin's death. France was then delaying action on the EDC, while Britain was supporting it; while, for its part, the Bundestag was preparing to vote on the EDC the following week. 18/ Thereafter the new Soviet leadership embarked on a peace program directed at the West, one element of which proved to be a respite for West Berlin and the Western presence there.

#### The Soviet Union Encircled

When the great wartime alliance finally unraveled and the cold war erupted fully in 1947-48 the USSR also became concerned that the United States and its European allies would also join to

them formerly more neutral nations around the periphery of the Soviet empire. Here too on a number of occasions, to deter these neighbors from identifying their fortunes with the West, Stalin resorted to raising the threat of Soviet military power. This danger was first presented by Iran.

Stalin must have been anxious about the direction Teheran would take the moment he determined to withdraw the Red Army from northern Iran under U.S. pressure in early 1946, although he might also have had hope that the withdrawal would lead to Iran's ratifying a major oil agreement concluded earlier and improved relations in the future. 19/ Whatever the case, in the spring of 1947 a U.S. agreement to sell arms to Iran was reported. Thereupon Teheran called upon the USSR for compensation payments related to the earlier Soviet occupation. When Premier Qavam es-Saltaneh then reformed his government to include several more pro-Western members and the Soviet-Iranian oil agreement was placed in doubt, 3,000 Soviet troops with armor and artillery were reportedly massed on Iran's border with the USSR and a significant infiltration effort was mounted. 20/ After Teheran moved to further reinforce its ties with the West in 1948 and 1949, Soviet troops and aircraft entered upon campaigns of border incursions and attacks upon Iranian frontier posts.

Stalin's purpose in massing troops on Iran's border in June 1951 was of a different sort. Earlier that spring the Western-favored Premier, General Ali Razmara, had been assassinated, whereupon the Majlis (Iran's parliament) voted to nationalize the Western-con-

trolled oil fields and the nationalist Mohammed Mossadegh became Premier. Accompanying these events were communist-led riots in the Anglo-Iranian oil fields in Khuzistan and the staging of a massive rally in Teheran on May Day by the communist-dominated Tudeh Party. These developments surely brought about rejoicing in the Kremlin which, no doubt, hoped for a further progression in this direction. The massing of troops on Iran's border in this context would seem to have had three purposes: to encourage the communists in Iran; to intimidate the Iranian government against harsh action directed at its Tudeh allies; and to deter Britain and the United States from intervening militarily. Fear of Soviet intervention in northern Iran was an important factor leading Britain not to intervene, notwithstanding reports of British naval movements in the Persian Gulf. The Truman administration, unlike London, appears to have been more generally opposed to military action, at least while the Red Army did not intervene. 21/

Nor did Moscow fail to react to the growth of ties between the United States and Scandinavian nations in 1947-49. Earlier, when the United States sought to obtain naval and air facilities in Iceland, the USSR made known a desire for bases on the Norwegian island of Spitzbergen; Moscow also appeared then to delay its withdrawal of troops from Denmark's Bornholm Island, which had been invaded by Soviet forces after German units there had refused to surrender at war's end. This Soviet occupation was terminated in the spring of 1946 on condition that only Danish military units

would reoccupy the island. 22/ In Moscow's mind at that time was probably the presence then of British troops in Denmark. Stalin's willingness to withdraw, it might be surmised, was meant to reduce its Scandinavian neighbors' fears and to avoid driving them closer to the United States; its occurrence at the same time as those withdrawals from Iran and China also suggests its being part of a broader strategem to retrench and allay Western anxieties about Soviet military power being used to extend Soviet frontiers and control indiscriminately.

By 1948 the U.S.-Soviet competition in Scandinavia was intense and became increasingly heavy-handed. When the Kremlin pressed Finland to sign a treaty of friendship the United States sent a task force including the aircraft carrier Valley Forge to visit Norway in anticipation of a Soviet diplomatic drive upon Oslo to gain acceptance of a treaty similar to the one being negotiated with Helsinki. 23/ After the Berlin blockade was inaugurated and Denmark sought arms from the United States and seemed otherwise drawing closer to the West, Soviet naval and air forces demonstrated Moscow's displeasure by repeatedly violating Copenhagen's sovereignty over Bornholm Island in exercises during September 1948.

Sweden opted to maintain its century-and-a-half-old position of neutrality, unlike Norway and Denmark which became charter signatories of the North Atlantic Treaty. Following the onset of the Korean War, though, Sweden did not remain immune from the



heightened tension in Europe and, like the West, moved to increase defense spending and gave serious attention to the possibility of Soviet aggression in the west. Soviet embassy activities and espionage by Swedish communists added to the concern and movement of Stockholm toward somewhat closer relations with the West, including, for example, a symbolic visit by Premier Tage Erlander to Washington. 24/ An apparent expression of Moscow's displeasure at this change in Sweden's attitude was the shooting down of two Swedish air force planes into the Baltic in mid-June 1952 just when the Swedes were beginning a major espionage trial. 25/

In this same line, it is worth recalling that the military threats to Yugoslavia in 1949 and 1951 were related, at least in part, to improved relations between Belgrade and Washington. Thus one month following the attack on the two Swedish aircraft and two days after the United States announced its intention to send jet aircraft, tanks, and heavy artillery to Yugoslavia, a Soviet jet fighter aircraft flew into Yugoslav air space. 26/

Also in 1952, the Kremlin used political-military diplomacy to express dissatisfaction to Japan in response to Tokyo's tying itself closely to the United States. Like the USSR in Eastern Europe, after the end of the war in the Pacific the United States effectively barred Moscow from having any effective influence upon political developments in Japan. Unsurprisingly, the Kremlin took considerable umbrage at this. Stalin wanted Japan to assume a posture of neutrality and to enter into close relations with the USSR

and later the People's Republic of China. Insofar as the Kremlin foresaw South Korea being taken over by the North, it could be expected that Japan's neutralization was probably seen leading to the exclusion of Western influence from Northeast Asia, inevitable dominance of the region by the USSR, and the gradual "finlandization" of Japan.

Soviet hostility toward Tokyo increased greatly when Japan became the command and supply center for U.S. military operations during the Korean War and even more so when the United States and its allies signed a peace treaty with Japan and Tokyo entered into a bilateral defense pact with Washington in 1951. Failing to obtain its objectives at the San Francisco conference, Moscow refused to sign the peace treaty, and when the security agreement was ratified by the U.S. Senate and declared to be in effect by President Truman in April 1952, the Soviet ambassador to the United States declared it 'illegal'. 27/

Following this event and Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida's informing the USSR that Japan no longer recognized the Soviet mission in Tokyo, Soviet warships and aircraft carried out military exercises near the eastern tip of Hokkaido. 28/ The final straw, for Stalin though, was Tokyo's recognition of Nationalist China and barring of ties with the People's Republic. Thereupon Moscow recalled its representative in Tokyo, Major General A.P. Kislenko, and within the next several weeks entered upon a campaign of regular intrusion by fighter aircraft operating from Sakhalin and the Kuriles

into Japanese airspace and over Hokkaido. 29/ These violations went on for six months and were ended in their regularity only after the United States decided to reinforce its air presence in Hokkaido and have F-86 aircraft intercept the MIGs. So that Moscow might not renew these activities, General Mark Clark, U.S. military commander in the Far East, was allowed to publically direct his pilots 'to shoot, if and when they contacted Communist MIG's'. 30/

What is observed, in summary, between 1948 and 1953 is the use of Soviet military power to not only insure the sovietization of Eastern Europe, the security of China, and relations with North Korea (as observed in chapter three), but also to deter the development of a fourth German reich and forestall encirclement by a cohesive set of formal and informal alliances led by the United States. This latter diplomacy generally proved futile; it did not deter the United States and tended to drive regional targets closer to Washington.

#### The Continuing Problem of Germany

The events in Poland and especially Hungary in the fall of 1956 led the Kremlin to worry deeply about the attractiveness of West Berlin to East Germans. Within the GDR and neighboring its capital, this city was, in effect, an outpost where Eastern Europeans could obtain a glimpse of the West and exit socialist paradise. It also offered sanction to political refugees. Thus in the aftermath of the turbulence in Eastern Europe in October-November 1956 Soviet troops began to delay and inspect closely trains and military

convoys going between West Berlin and West Germany and to demand greater documentation for transit. 31/ In October 1957 a complete border closing was effected while the GDR carried out a currency changeover, and in January 1958 U.S. army trains were forced to remain at Marienborn in a dispute over procedures.

Of even greater importance to Moscow, though, was the role of West Germany within NATO and the extent of the Federal Republic's rearmament. Prompting new Soviet anxiety and diplomatic offensive against the West was the U.S. proposal in 1957 to emplace sizable numbers of tactical nuclear weapons and intermediate range ballistic missiles in Europe and to train non-U.S. NATO military men to use them. The NATO council resolution in December 1957 to station ballistic missiles on West German soil was a matter of the utmost importance to the USSR. The Kremlin wanted to bar the possibility of Bonn gaining any access to nuclear weapons and, if possible, to obtain West Germany's neutralization. 32/ Further, Moscow sought Western recognition of the East German regime and of the GDR's borders and to terminate the difficulties West Berlin was causing its ally, these difficulties being accentuated in 1957-58 by the Ulbricht government's drive to socialize agriculture and industry. 33/ By the fall of 1958 over 10,000 people were leaving the GDR for the West each month. 34/ In Khrushchev's words, "the most acute problem facing us was the German question. All other matters . . . depended upon our finding a solution in Germany--and the German question in turn depended on the issue of West Berlin." 35/

The first tack taken by the USSR was to "support" the Rapacki proposal made in the fall of 1957, for a nuclear free zone in Central Europe (that is, East and West Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia). This was followed in January 1958 by a much wider-ranging Soviet memorandum calling for nuclear weapons free "zones of peace" in Europe, and conventional force reductions and measures to prevent surprise attack in Europe. Moscow also announced unilateral troop reductions at this time. Further moves were a summit proposal and then threat to deploy ballistic missiles to the GDR, Poland and Czechoslovakia if NATO would not come around. When all of these actions came to nought, Khrushchev prompted the 1958-59 Berlin "deadline" crisis.

#### The 1958 "Deadline" Crisis

In a speech on November 10, 1958 Khrushchev declared it time 'to renounce the remnants of the occupation regime in Berlin' and announced Moscow's intention of handing over its powers in Berlin to East Germany, thus forcing the West to recognize and to deal with the Ulbricht regime. 36/ When the West failed to react, Soviet troops four days later detained several U.S. army trucks for eight and a half hours on the autobahn outside Berlin. 37/ Finally on November 27 the Kremlin announced that if it could not reach an agreement with the West making West Berlin a demilitarized city within a sovereign East Germany within six months, it would then sign a separate accord with the GDR. This ultimatum caused great consternation and diplomatic activity among Western leaders and, to an extent, succeeded in turning the members of NATO against one another. In the end, though, Khrushchev

accepted a proposal for a foreign ministers conference at Geneva and, in effect, withdrew the element of a deadline.

What is especially interesting for our purpose is the minimal Soviet use of demonstrative military power throughout this crisis. The autobahn incident of November 10 was a small affair, apparently meant to remind the West of its tenuous position in West Berlin. Such was the purpose too of halting a U.S. Army truck convoy from Berlin in early February and buzzing in the Berlin air corridors of U.S. transport aircraft flying at high altitudes (in turn, signalling U.S. readiness for a new airlift) in early spring 1959. 38/ Although Soviet leaders made numerous claims about the USSR's development and production of intercontinental ballistic missiles and asserted an achievement of strategic parity, the Red Army and air forces in East Germany, as elsewhere in Eastern Europe, were not reinforced and Western aircraft were never fired upon; nor was any mini-blockade established. 39/ The real threat was presented verbally and applied to the future: If the West used force against East Germany after the Ulbricht regime took action to isolate and gain control of West Berlin, which was expected to follow a Soviet-GDR accord, then the USSR would fulfill its military commitment to the GDR as a Warsaw Pact ally. 40/

Although restrained, U.S. military activity during the crisis was more noteworthy than that by the USSR: In a move designed to be unobserved publicly but seen clearly by Soviet intelligence, the rosters of U.S. combat and support units in Europe were filled

out; air force transport flights showed off their readiness for an airlift; and in May, as the deadline approached, nuclear weapons laden U.S. aircraft carriers put to sea in an alert posture in the Mediterranean while Marines were alerted for rapid movement to West Berlin. 41/ These U.S. military activities were prudent; although unnecessary if Khrushchev had no intention of signing a unilateral accord with East Germany, they may have played a role in leading to or, more likely confirmed, that course.

Between the trailing off of the deadline crisis and waning of the Spirit of Camp David, terminated finally by the U-2 incident and collapse of the Paris summit conference, Khrushchev sought his objectives in Central Europe by investing in personal and traditional diplomacy. Serious pressure upon West Berlin might have been exerted beginning in the spring of 1960 had Khrushchev not then become occupied by other matters of conflict with the United States, including developments in Cuba, the Congo and Laos, the disarmament negotiations in Geneva and the RB-47 incident. 42/ Although under intense domestic pressure within the party and constrained by the public emergence of the rift with China, Khrushchev seems to have concluded that in this environment the risk was too great of losing control after prompting a new Berlin crisis. Also, having already failed with Eisenhower, Khrushchev seems to have been prepared to wait until a new President was in office, himself rooting for the Democrats (first Adlai Stevenson and then John F. Kennedy). 43/ In October 1960 Khrushchev explicitly threatened a new crisis in April 1961 if the new administra-

tion did not agree to a summit meeting then.

The Ulbricht regime in East Germany did not stand aside in abeyance, however. In September, just before Khrushchev left for the U.N. General Assembly session, the GDR demanded that West Berliners obtain special police permits in order to travel in East Berlin. When the Western allies retaliated in kind, a Soviet fighter aircraft buzzed a British airliner, almost causing it to crash. 44/ The East Germans and their lobby in the USSR may also have been responsible for Khrushchev's aforementioned demand for a new summit.

#### The 1961 Aide-Memoire Crisis

Khrushchev launched his new offensive on Germany in early June 1961 at the Vienna summit meeting. Unless the West agreed to the "normalization" of the status of Berlin, the USSR would sign a unilateral accord with the GDR, the Soviet leader told President Kennedy. The new President was also given an aide-memoire calling for the two Germanys to sign within six months either a reunification agreement or separate treaties with each of the four powers. Berlin was to become a "free city" with access controlled by East Germany. In mid-June Khrushchev made these demands public and in early July he announced an increase in Soviet defense spending and suspension of planned troop cuts. President Kennedy responded publicly on July 25 by announcing in a televised speech a recommitment to Western rights in Berlin and his intention to ask Congress to authorize the following measures: an increase in defense spending of \$3.2 billion (about \$7.2 billion in 1978 dollars); an increase in military manpower



of 217,000 personnel; expanded draft calls; a call-up of reserves; the retention or reactivation of ships and aircraft slated for retirement; and an increase in civil defense spending. 45/

During the next three months after this stocking of positions and before the air of crisis trailed off, the Kremlin used Soviet armed forces for two purposes: to support the Ulbricht regime's sealing off of West Berlin from the GDR, and to respond in kind to the consequent U.S. military buildup in Europe. After the Kennedy administration indicated it would not abandon West Berlin quickly, if at all, the Kremlin finally responded affirmatively to the GDR's desperation to take definitive action to stop the exit of East Germans through West Berlin (this flight increased dramatically after the crisis began) and terminate the powerful influence exerted by the latter upon East Germans. In a show of support, when East German border police moved on August 12-13 to seal off West Berlin, Moscow had two Soviet divisions surround the city.

To these actions the United States responded only symbolically--on August 14-16 a U.S. Army battle group was sent to West Berlin, tours of duty for 26,000 U.S. naval personnel were extended, and 113 reserve and national guard units were alerted; whereupon the USSR responded in kind by holding military maneuvers in the USSR and probed further on August 23 via notes to Washington, London and Paris threatening to close off their access to West Berlin by air. On the previous day the GDR had closed off all but one of the West Berlin border crossing points open to foreigners, including occupation troops, and had established a 100 meter no-man's-land around the

enclave. However, no Soviet military moves accompanied the East German action on the 22d or this new major threat for which, unlike the sealing off of West Berlin from East Berlin and East Germany (formally, four power authority still existed in Berlin), not a shred of legal foundation could be demonstrated. As to those Soviet military activities beginning on August 29, these occurred as part of a tit-for-tat game with the United States which ensued following the strong U.S. military reaction to the above mentioned Soviet threat.

The day after the Soviet notes were delivered 1,000 U.S. troops, with tanks, were deployed along the West-East Berlin perimeter; and on the 25th 76,500 U.S. reservists were called up. This was followed on the 29th and 30th by the Kremlin announcing the retention on active duty of personnel about to be released into the reserves and resumption of nuclear weapons testing. Four days later, while four U.S. Air Force fighter squadrons were being deployed to Europe, the Soviets also announced naval exercises to be held in the Barents and Kara seas. These exercises, beginning on September 12, were sandwiched by the resumption of U.S. underground nuclear testing and the deployment of airborne troops from the United States to Greece and Turkey, exercises in the Mediterranean area, and a call-up of two U.S. national guard divisions and 249 smaller reserve and guard units. The only Soviet action interfering with Western air access to West Berlin was the unannounced harassment on one day in mid-September of several U.S. airliners by Soviet fighters.

The frequency and significance of military activity by both sides slowed down beginning in late September. Realizing that the

Berlin Wall was the most that could be achieved without a serious risk of war and with the six month period given in his June aide-memoire approaching an end, Khrushchev used this opportunity and the forum of the twenty-second Soviet Party Congress to lift the deadline.

How to explain the confrontation then ten days later, on October 26, of a number of U.S. and ten Soviet tanks at the Friedrichstrasse crossing (Checkpoint Charley)? Khrushchev claims a simple explanation: The Kremlin was persuaded that the United States was preparing to use bulldozers, tanks and infantry to tear down certain portions of the newly established Wall and deployed units to face those forces down and deter that action. 46/ If the Kennedy administration was preparing for a probe of this sort or U.S. actions gave such an appearance, then the Soviet deployment could be accepted as a reactive demonstration of a powerful commitment. Checking to see if it might be able to bring the Wall down literally or figuratively, and revise its effect, the United States, according to this line, found the Kremlin prepared to defend its position.

A second explanation is that local tension around this crossing rose to the point that each side found itself plunged into a face-off as a means of informing the other that it would not tolerate some new revision of the status quo. This thought would explain why both sides could claim a tactical victory. Although neither might have intended aggressive behavior, both could thus perceive its action as one of successful deterrence. A third and more complex account relates this confrontation to developments at the Soviet

party congress and Khrushchev's consequent need to regain lost authority while demonstrating that the United States could not be finessed out of West Berlin. In short, this argument suggests that faced with attacks by the Chinese and Soviet party hawks, Khrushchev provoked the confrontation to demonstrate his personal will, to check to see how committed the West indeed was, and, if the United States did react strongly, to be able to identify continuing opposition to an end to the crisis as courting war. 47/

#### The Missile Crisis

Khrushchev's last attempt to solve the threat of West Germany and West Berlin to future Soviet security and the GDR prompted the Cuban missile crisis. After sorting out the essential failure of the 1961 campaign--Bonn's role within NATO continued to grow, and West Berlin remained a Western enclave within East Germany--there was apparently no serious inclination in Moscow to repeat this experience, itself reinforcing the failure of the 1958-59 "deadline" gambit; which is not to say the Kremlin was willing to allow Western confidence about this conclusion: Thus, for example, in early December 1961 Soviet military men delayed a U.S. Army convoy outside Berlin and in February and March Soviet planes flew through the Berlin air corridors and dropped chaff to confuse Western radars. Another U.S. Army convoy was blocked in May. Rather than pursue this futile line, however, Khrushchev appears to have become persuaded, probably during the spring of 1962, that he could attain his objectives by emplacing strategic nuclear forces in Cuba and

then trade this deployment for an acceptable settlement on Germany.<sup>48/</sup>

As Tatu has observed:

The objective of the manoeuvre was clearly Berlin. Ever since Khrushchev had raised the issue in 1958, the Russians had tried all possible tactics: first pressure (the six-month ultimatum), then smiles (at Camp David), then pressure again and even the fist-banging session (during Khrushchev's summer offensive of 1961). Everything had been in vain. In the spring of 1962 an entirely fresh approach was needed. Khrushchev's prestige was largely at stake and his adversaries in the communist camp were using the issue as a weapon against him. <sup>49/</sup>

To relieve this pressure, Khrushchev ordered sent to Cuba in the summer and fall of 1962 the following armaments: medium range (1,100 nautical miles) ballistic missiles; intermediate range (2,200 nautical miles) ballistic missiles; IL-28 (Beagle) bombers capable of carrying up to 6000 pounds of nuclear or non-nuclear ordnance; surface-to-air and cruise missiles; missile patrol boats; and MIG-21 fighter aircraft. With these weapon systems came 22,000 military personnel and technicians including, in addition to missile operators and presumably pilots, four regimental-size armored units equipped with T-54 tanks, FROG surface-to-surface tactical nuclear rockets, and anti-tank missiles. <sup>50/</sup>

The military mission of the IRBM, MRBM, and IL-28 units was quite clearly to present a Soviet strategic nuclear threat proximate to the United States. The other forces--SAL's, cruise missiles, patrol boats, and MIG-21s and ground units--may have been sent to

deter U.S. military action against these strategic forces and to defend them. As related earlier, however, it is possible that at least some of these defensive forces were sent only at Castro's insistence--that is, as a quid pro quo--to add to Cuba's more general security.

After President Kennedy announced the "quarantine" and insisted upon the missiles being removed from Cuba, the Kremlin refrained from provocative military activities. The alert of Soviet and other Warsaw Pact forces did not surprise U.S. leaders. Soviet submarines that joined Russian freighters enroute to Cuba were allowed to suffer U.S. Navy harassment including their forced surfacing. Of great significance, Moscow did not choose to threaten Berlin itself in any way as was at least half expected by the Kennedy administration. The only really provocative military action directed against the United States during the crisis was the shooting down over Cuba of a U-2 aircraft by a SAM missile, almost certainly directed by Russian eyes and hands. This could have prompted a responsive U.S. military action. The Kremlin and Havana, viewing this action from a defensive context, though, may have meant to signal Washington that Soviet military units in Cuba would be used to defend against a U.S. attempt to destroy the offensive missiles.

#### Maintaining the Status Quo and Detente

After the forced withdrawal from Cuba the USSR provoked no new crises over West Germany or West Berlin. Thereafter Soviet military actions threatening West Berlin's communications were almost

always in response to what Moscow took to be some specific wrong perpetrated by Bonn and politically threatening to East Germany and Soviet rights in Berlin. Harassment in the air corridors and the delay of military convoys in the spring of 1963 followed an increased number of escapes from East Berlin, bombings along the Wall and of the Soviet Intourist Office in West Berlin, and the announcement that President Kennedy would visit West Berlin in June. At this time, too, Moscow saw Bonn using indirect methods to extend its jurisdiction to West Berlin. 51/ In response to Bonn's holding a Bundestag session in West Berlin Soviet jets overflew West Berlin and Red Army and GDR troops closed the autobahn and paraded on it in April 1965. Four years then elapsed before Moscow again exercised military leverage over West Berlin, protesting in March 1969 the West German Federal Assembly's meeting in the enclave to elect a new GFR President. Forthcoming visits by British Prime Minister Wilson and President Nixon were probably what infused Moscow to jam Western aircraft communications and radars, close the autobahn again, and order troop maneuvers and aircraft reinforcements.

During the course of the cold war Soviet citizens were regularly warned and military men were exhorted that world capitalism, led by American imperialism and German revanchism, was waiting only for the right moment to attack the USSR. Although the Soviet development of nuclear weapons, long-range bombers and then intercontinental ballistic missiles allowed the USSR to devastate the West, they did little to allay Soviet beliefs about Western hostility toward communist nations. The "ruling circles of the United States" were expected to do everything possible "to preserve the old, thoroughly decayed founda-

tions of the capitalist world, to stem the progressive evolution of human society." 52/ Although Soviet military power might keep the West at bay, given the chance, the United States would use violence against the USSR. "The threat of... preventive war by American imperialists against the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist camp is quite real," Marshal V.D. Sokolovsky informed his readers. 53/ If world war remained a distinct possibility, relaxation could not be afforded. In addition to the danger of preemptive nuclear attack by the United States, the Soviet Union continued to be obsessed about West German "revanchists" and NATO aggression. 54/

Soviet perceptions of Western intent began to change seriously only after the elections in West Germany in September 1969 and the formation of a government by Chancellor Willy Brandt. In November 1969 the Federal Republic signed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, and in December the Brandt government gave a positive response to Moscow's long-standing call for a final peace conference to ratify the national borders that had existed in Central Europe since the end of the Second World War.

The increased deployment of Soviet ICBMs, the development of missile-armed nuclear submarines, and the overall movement toward a position of strategic parity with the United States further increased Moscow's confidence about what could be expected of the West. Between 1962 and 1970 the ratio of U.S. to USSR strategic nuclear delivery vehicles declined from approximately 7.3:1 to 1.1:1, the ratio of the superpowers' respective force loadings (warheads) dropping from 37.5:1 to 2.3:1. 55/ As President Nixon related in early 1970: "an inescapable



reality of the 1970's is the Soviet Union's possession of powerful and sophisticated strategic forces approaching, and in some categories, exceeding ours in numbers and capability." 56/ President Nixon's opposition to "sharp increases" in U.S. strategic weapons development and any attempt to reverse this movement toward strategic parity, and his decision to seek only a position of 'sufficiency' for the U.S. strategic weapons arsenal was accepted by Moscow with satisfaction. 57/

In August 1970 Bonn signed the Treaty of Moscow, thereby recognizing the existing frontiers between East and West Germany, and between East Germany and Poland. Also that summer East and West reached the point of exchanging memoranda on the agenda of a European security conference. The purpose of the large Warsaw Pact exercises held in East Germany in October 1970 under the command of a GDR general was to reassure the GDR as much as it was to caution the West that 'East Germany is and will be an integral part of the East bloc', as one Eastern European diplomat related. 58/ Traffic hold-ups by Soviet border guards in January 1971 seemed less related to Soviet objectives vis-à-vis the West in the on-going four power talks on Berlin than a response to East German pressure for the USSR to uphold GDR interests. 59/ Further leading the Soviets in this direction was an impending visit by GFR Chancellor Brandt and President Heinemann to West Berlin and, perhaps, the food price riots in Poland in December 1970. That the Kremlin wanted very much to avoid provoking any new serious confrontation with the United States was signalled in the fall of 1970 by Moscow's withdrawal of a submarine

tender and termination of construction of ballistic missile submarine base facilities at Cienfuegos, Cuba, upon U.S. demand that this constituted a violation of the Kennedy-Khrushchev agreement which brought the Cuban missile crisis to an end. 60/

In 1971 the Quadripartite agreement on Berlin was signed, and the United States and the Soviet Union signed the Agreement on Measures to Reduce the Risk of Outbreak of Nuclear War. Finally, in 1972 a SALT agreement was reached and the Joint Declaration on Basic Principles of Relations was signed by the United States and the Soviet Union. There followed detente, an important element of which was reduced Soviet suspicions about Western intent and aggressiveness. If Stalin assumed the inevitability of war as long as the two different ideological camps existed, and if Malenkov and Khrushchev concluded that war in the nuclear age was no longer a sane policy choice, in the early 1970s Soviet political authorities began to believe that the West might be willing to accept the USSR as it is, the existence of communist regimes in Eastern Europe (including the GDR), and the USSR's continued domination of Eastern Europe. The 1975 Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe signed in Helsinki in 1975 was the cap to this period of progress as it was perceived in the USSR.

Nuclear war with the United States and future regime change in West Germany remained matters of concern in the USSR, but Soviet leaders appeared more and more to be thinking of the danger as one of Western military capabilities--that is, U.S. strategic nuclear weapons and NATO--and not in terms of a capitalist and revanchist

world waiting only for the right moment to attack or undermine the USSR and its Western empire. Concurrently, military preparedness to deter and defend an attack on the Revolution and homeland appeared to become a matter of prudence rather than a panic-driven necessity. Marshal Ustinov observed on Revolution Day 1977, "the defensive potential of the Soviet Union is maintained at such a high level that no one would risk disturbing our peaceful life." 61/ Expressed more positively by Chairman Brezhnev, "people look into the future with a growing hope." 62/

An important consequence of the agreements reached between 1969 and 1975, the continued growth of Soviet strategic as well as conventional military capabilities, and Moscow's changed perspective of the West as compared with that in decades past was an absence of Soviet political-military operations aimed directly at the West. How much things had changed in Central Europe was indicated by Soviet behavior in late 1977- early 1978 after the Western allies turned down a request to curtail their military patrols in East Berlin. The Kremlin responded not by action prejudicing the Western presence in Berlin, but by increasing the number of Soviet military patrols in West Berlin, as was its legal right.

Nevertheless, while Moscow did not perceive it necessary or advantageous to threaten the use of military force to resolve disagreements between the Warsaw Treaty nations and NATO, it did not resist temptations to enter into conflict situations between NATO nations, presumably for the strategic purpose of undermining the fabric of the organization further. From a perspective of Soviet

security interests, "...although the threat of war has been pushed back, it has not yet been eliminated. Imperialism was and remains a source of military danger." 63/ Many also continued to view the USSR as an island in a hostile sea. For example, an article in Pravda not too long ago told readers that "the American military's bases encircle the territory of the Soviet Union and the other Socialist community countries in a solid ring." 64/ Improved relations between the United States and China and between Peking and other NATO capitals added further dimension to this mentality. 65/

#### Adding to NATO's Troubles

To counter this continuing danger and, equally, to improve the USSR's long-term ability to exert influence upon the West, it appears that in May 1973, in the midst of the Cod War between Britain and Iceland, a group of about ten surface ships flying the Red Star and an equal number of submarines exercised in Icelandic waters. Although this presence was not coupled with any statement of intent, that it was coincidental seems unlikely. Soviet warships had recently completed a major exercise in the North Atlantic and Norwegian Sea; a portion of this exercise was also conducted near the area into which the Soviet warships entered during the Cod War. A new exercise in these waters so soon afterward was unusual. In the midst of this conflict between Britain and Iceland another exercise area could have been found if the USSR wanted to avoid an appearance of intervention. Insofar as the Soviet entry also occurred following a reported request to the USSR by Iceland's Minister of Fisheries for a gunboat to strengthen his nation's

coast guard and just after London ordered British warships into the area it is reasonable to view this naval activity as a subtle demonstration to Reykjavik that Iceland did not have to face Britain alone, but could have the powerful support of the USSR; and to London that it might have to contend with a superpower. 66/

That the dispute between Britain and Iceland could at least chink NATO was indicated quickly when Reykjavik, responding to London's sending frigates to protect British trawlers, denied Royal Air Force planes landing rights at the NATO airfield at Keflavik. Withdrawal from NATO also became a subject of discussion in Iceland. 67/ Particularly in the minds of Soviet naval planners may have been hope that the Icelandic government would hinder the important NATO anti-submarine warfare operations dependent upon use of the Keflavik air base. Continued NATO usage of this base was already an issue in Icelandic politics and the Icelandic government was then pledged to review the matter. 68/

Moscow also appeared open to political-military diplomacy during the 1974 Cyprus crisis. Immediately after the coup against President Makarios by Greek government supported insurgents, a Soviet task group including cruisers and destroyers moved toward the island, and thereafter the Soviet Mediterranean fleet was rapidly reinforced from the Black Sea. Of further significance, Moscow was reported (by U.S. Defense Department officials) to have also placed its seven airborne divisions on alert, while Soviet AN-12 and AN-22 transport aircraft were made more ready for action. 69/

Occurring prior to the restoration of constitutional government in Athens, these actions were able to be interpreted as supportive of Turkey, the Kremlin having cultivated Ankara for some time. Turkey was deeply disturbed by the coup in Cyprus; the possibility of Turkish military intervention in Cyprus and Greek-Turkish conflict was immediately recognized by all observers. Also possible, though, those related Soviet naval deployments may have been meant as a counterbalance to a concurrent U.S. naval presence and as a demonstration of continued support for Makarios who, after fleeing to Malta, went on to London. The United States had been very close to the Greek government and had always encountered difficulties in dealing with Makarios who retained a certain distance from Washington. 70/ That the Greek government directed the coup and had the support of Washington was a supposition made by many at the time; for its part, the United States did not condemn the coup and expressed no interest in the return of Makarios. 71/

As to the Soviet airborne alert and reported troop movements in Bulgaria, almost certainly these actions were precautionary, in recognition of the possibility of war breaking out between Greece and Turkey in Thrace adjacent to Bulgaria, a Warsaw Pact ally. Whatever the proportion of the Kremlin's actions directed toward weakening NATO, though, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that this was a consideration and that to some degree Soviet military units were used in furtherance of this interest.

#### Security Relations with China

Moscow's backing off from confrontation with the West over West Germany and West Berlin following the Cuban missile crisis

was related to more than the disastrous outcome to the emplacement of missiles in Cuba, the disposition of Khrushchev's successors, and growing resignation about the Federal Republic's place within NATO. Of great significance also was the USSR's increasingly hostile relations with China and the development between 1963 and 1969 of a situation that threatened to end in war between the two communist giants.

Relations between Moscow and Peking began to deteriorate following Khrushchev's de-Stalinization speech at the Twentieth Party Congress in early 1956. Unconsulted by Khrushchev, the Chinese perceived this announcement as undermining the legitimacy of communist regimes everywhere as well as the struggle with the West. The gulf widened further when Moscow, unimpressed by Peking's demands for more militant global struggle against the capitalist world, accepted Mao's thesis that 'the east wind prevails over the west wind' only to a limited degree and remained steadfast in its call for 'peaceful coexistence'. Moreover, while Khrushchev was willing to probe the West seriously to satisfy important Soviet security objectives--that is, to obtain a satisfactory settlement on the questions of Germany and West Berlin, as perhaps precipitated by the worsening Sino-Soviet relationship 72/--he proved unwilling to help the Chinese develop nuclear weapons. Further parting occurred when Moscow turned down Peking's request for assistance in building up China's navy; when the Chinese abandoned the Soviet economic model in favor of a radical domestic course; and when the Kremlin adopted a stance of neutrality in China's border dispute with India. 73/

### Peking Raises the Border Issue

In the early 1960s Peking gave up all hope of cajoling the Kremlin into accepting its proscribed course. This conclusion reached, Mao determined to raise China's long closeted desire for large territorial adjustments of the Sino-Soviet border. Hence in March 1963 Peking indicated its intention to lay claim to south-eastern Siberia, the Maritime Province, and one-half million square miles of Soviet Central Asia, all obtained by Czarist Russia in the nineteenth century via what the Chinese termed 'unequal' treaties. Precipitating this threat were the harsh polemics exchanged between Peking and Moscow over the outcome to the Cuban missile crisis and Khrushchev's point to the Chinese in this exchange that the USSR had recognized U.S. nuclear power just as China sensibly recognized the existence of British Hong Kong and Portuguese Macao. 74/ Probably another background factor were border incidents that had already occurred and the exodus of a large number of Kazakhs and Uighurs from China to the USSR in 1962. Aside from Peking's material interests in the disputed territories, bringing this issue up served to place the USSR further on the defensive and to identify Moscow to the world as following the imperialist path of the Czars and the West. Chinese domestic needs were also served. 75/

After the Korean War Soviet military strength in the Far East was reduced from roughly 30 to 12-14 divisions. In 1965, following inconclusive talks on border and territorial issues, new assertions



by Peking, the beginning of the Great Cultural Revolution in China, further border incidents and, ominous for the USSR, the onset of nuclear testing by China, Moscow began to slowly build up its military position in the area, filling out units, rotating them with more capable Soviet troops deployed in Central and Eastern Europe, sending surface-to-surface nuclear weapons and other advanced armaments eastward, and moving forces closer to the border. 76/ Moscow also went out of its way to reaffirm its alliance with Mongolia: In January 1966 Soviet party chairman Brezhnev, accompanied by Defense Minister Marshal R. Ya Malinovsky, signed in Ulan Bator a new twenty year mutual assistance pact. Thereafter Soviet troops were deployed into Mongolia for the first time in a decade. 77/

When relations with Peking continued to worsen the USSR further reinforced its military position. Red Guard activity in neighboring Sinkiang province, the feverish pitch and violent turns of the Cultural Revolution elsewhere in China—for more than two weeks in early 1967 the Soviet Embassy in Peking was even besieged--and continued nuclear testing (a thermonuclear device was exploded in June 1967) all made Moscow increasingly anxious that, despite China's overall military weakness vis-à-vis the USSR, Peking might nevertheless either provoke an edge-of-war crisis by, for example, deploying intermediate range missiles to Albania or, even more irrationally, seek to restore by violence some portion of the so-called lost territories. 78/ Boldly facing the thought of joint Soviet-American attack on China, Foreign Minister Marshal Chen Yi related, for example: 'we are not afraid...The Chinese people are ready for war and

confident of final victory. We now have the atomic bomb and also rockets...all the nuclear bombs that fall on China will be returned with interest'. 79/ For the first time since the Great Patriotic War Moscow felt the possibility of the USSR being the victim of unprovoked or preemptive military action and saw the territorial security of the USSR in serious jeopardy. As John Newhouse has observed: "By 1969, there was general acceptance that the real purpose of the Soviet Galosh ABM was to protect Moscow from primitive Chinese nuclear weapons, as distinct from high performance American missiles." 80/

Hence after a slow beginning in 1965-66, the Soviet military buildup proceeded apace in 1967-68. Better able divisions in Eastern Europe continued to be rotated with divisions in the Far East and Soviet divisional size forces began to enter Mongolia. In November 1967 Soviet tank units paraded in Ulan Bator in a public demonstration of warning to China and show of commitment to Mongolia. By mid-1968 estimates of Soviet strength in Mongolia ranged up to six divisions; and in the summer of that year, at the same time the USSR was expressing itself martially to Czechoslovakia, large-scale Soviet maneuvers were held in Mongolia. 81/ Additional divisions also appear to have been deployed to Soviet Central Asia. Considering the improved state then of Soviet-U.S. relations, the August 1968 Soviet-Japanese agreement for their joint development of Siberia, the invasion of Czechoslovakia and the Brezhnev Doctrine, these further Soviet military deployments and activities directed at China

provided a serious warning to Peking within an ominous global strategic environment.

#### The 1969 Clashes and Soviet Threats

The increasingly tense situation finally came to a head between March and August 1969. With both sides evidently intent on demonstrating their resolve, a Chinese ambush of a Soviet patrol on Damansky Island in the Ussuri River on March 2, 1969 led to a Soviet provocation there on March 15; this latter incident including artillery exchanges, the use of Soviet tanks, and infantry battle that raged for about nine hours and ended with some 60 Russian and 800 Chinese casualties. Thereafter other border areas were also subjected to violent interchanges which continued intermittently until August. In April the scene of violence shifted westward to territory near Chuguchak where the Sinkiang-Uighur Autonomous Region of China fronts the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic. While clashes continued in this area, fighting broke out in May and June in the Amur River border area in the east again. Finally, on August 13, 1969, again near the Dzungarian Gate, the ancient trade and invasion route between Sinkiang and Kazakhstan, a new major clash occurred in which Peking claimed Soviet tanks, helicopters and several hundred troops entered Sinkiang to provoke battle. Indeed, after the initial clash on March 2, the Soviet Union appeared generally responsible for the hostilities that followed. 82/

Soviet objectives in the aftermath of the first Damansky Island incident appear to have been threefold: to cajole Peking

into entering new talks to 'normalize' the border situation--that is, to obtain a diplomatic framework allowing the USSR to retain the territory prized by China; to deter Peking from further military action against Soviet personnel and territory; to be prepared for war with China. Soviet border provocations were aimed at satisfying the first two of these goals; the March 15 action, as a particular exhibition of Soviet determination, was also aimed at the international communist movement and catered to Russian nationalism and a desire for revenge. 83/ The last concern--to be better able to defend the USSR--as well as the first two more political objectives were further served by a number of other political-military actions including: the transfer of six additional Red Army divisions to the Far East; the expansion of airfields in the east; a call-up of reserves and general expansion of the Red Army from 140 to 148 divisions; and major exercises in the Amur River area and the Transbaikal military district. About the latter exercise, the Soviet military newspaper Krasnaya zvezda proclaimed Soviet forces to have scored 'a convincing victory' after 'courageously and decisively attacking the enemy' (*italics added*). 84/

In late summer the Kremlin appeared to lose patience with Peking which, notwithstanding its agreement in May to enter new talks by the Sino-Soviet Commission for Navigation on Boundary Rivers, had not backed down in its propaganda or in its demands for satisfaction by the USSR as a precondition for more fundamental border talks. Like Israel facing the Arabs, Moscow found itself unable

to translate military superiority into political recognition; and like the Arabs, Peking saw an ace in its willingness to talk about the issue in a direct negotiation. Part of the Kremlin's answer to this frustrating situation was the more escalatory provocation of August 13, already referred to. Much more serious, though, was its resort to threatening China with nuclear war.

In early August Colonel General V.F. Tolubko, a Red Army missile specialist and author of an article on August 6 commemorating the 1929 outbreak of conflict between the USSR and China, was appointed to command the Soviet Far East Military District. When this form of warning and the August 13 provocation together failed to produce the desired effect, a Pravda editorial hinted to Peking that it was courting nuclear war by adhering to "absurd territorial claims against the Soviet Union." "If a war were to break out under present conditions, with the armaments, lethal weapons and modern means of delivery that now exist, no continent would be unaffected," the Kremlin allowed in warning Peking and as an advisory to the West. 85/ At the same time the Kremlin circulated a letter among the governments of Eastern European and foreign communist parties raising the possibility of a preemptive nuclear strike against China. 86/ Further amplification was then provided by Soviet Deputy Defense Minister M.V. Zakharov, who suggested the possibility of a surprise attack against China; and by Victor Louis, a British journalist widely regarded as an unofficial outlet for Soviet statements, who wrote in the London Evening News:

Some circles in Eastern Europe are asking why the doctrine (i.e., the Brezhnev Doctrine) that Russia was justified in interfering in Czechoslovakia's affairs a year ago should not be extended to China. Events in the past year have confirmed that the Soviet Union is adhering to the doctrine that socialist countries have the right to interfere in each other's affairs in their own interest or those of others who are threatened.

The fact that China is many times larger than Czechoslovakia and might offer active resistance is, according to these Marxist theoreticians, no reason for not applying the doctrine. Whether or not the Soviet Union will attack Lop Nor, China's nuclear center, is a question of strategy, and so the world would only learn about it afterwards. 87/

Insofar as the Louis article followed by a week Chou En-lai's agreement at a hastily arranged meeting in Peking with Soviet Premier Kosygin to resume border negotiations with the USSR, this piece may have been meant only to confirm Moscow's seriousness and to extract a formal statement from Peking renouncing violence as a means of altering the existing border arrangement. 88/ This was obtained on October 7 when Peking, announcing an agreement with the USSR to reopen negotiations, related that the issue should be 'settled peacefully' and that 'even if it cannot be settled for the time being, the status quo of the border should be maintained, and there definitely should be no resort to the use of force'. 89/

#### The Further Buildup of Soviet Power and New Incidents

Although the border talks that began in October 1969 quickly proved fruitless and Sino-Soviet relations thereafter remained

stormy, the Kosygin-Chou meeting, the Chinese statement of October 9 and the punctuation of new negotiations gave Moscow and Peking a long enough pause to side-step out of the drift toward war. But not far back from the brink, the two sides kept up their heated diplomatic battle and a sense of serious military confrontation continued, despite each one's taking care not to provoke new border incidents. The Red Army's presence in the border areas (the Transbaikalian and Far East Military Districts and Mongolia), which mounted from 15 divisions in 1968 to 21 divisions in 1969, rose to 30 divisions in 1970 and to 45 divisions in 1973. Concurrent with this expansion occurred an increase in Soviet air-power deployed in the east. Although Peking moved forces closer to the border to meet Soviet deployments, the number of Chinese divisions in these areas was maintained at 32-33 until 1972-73 when Peking moved to match the further Soviet expansion and itself fielded in these theaters a total of 45 divisions. 90/

The extent of continuing Soviet anxiety was further denoted by a proposal by V.S. Semenov, head of the Soviet SALT delegation in Vienna in July 1970, to his American counterpart, Gerard Smith, calling in effect for a U.S.-Soviet alliance against other nuclear powers--read China. Suggested Moscow: The USSR and United States, upon discovering a plan for a 'provocative' action or attack, would together act to prevent it; failing this, they would retaliate jointly against the third party. 91/ About this time China was beginning to emplace its first intermediate-range ballistic missiles. 92/ The Kissinger and Nixon visits to China and general movement toward Sino-American rapprochement that ensued in 1971 raised Moscow fur-

ther in its seat.

After peaking in 1973, the Soviet military presence in the east leveled off and then dropped down to 43 divisions where it remained thereafter. 93/ A reported Sino-Soviet military clash in the Mongolian border area in November 1974, perhaps provoked by Moscow to push Peking into new negotiations, was not followed by renewed militarization of the on-going verbal jousting; and a new round of negotiations was begun in Peking in early 1975. A somewhat similar sequence of events occurred a year later. In that instance China released in December 1975 a Soviet helicopter crew captured in 1974 shortly after the report of a large increase in the numbers of Soviet tactical missiles and armored vehicles in the Far East. Having earlier accused the captured Soviet crew members of engaging in espionage, Peking called their story credible upon releasing them. 94/ Whether this was coincidence or a response to Soviet military pressure is difficult to tell.

New instances of Kremlin military pressure upon Peking to behave more desirably appeared to occur again in 1978. On April 1 a long Pravda editorial again rejected China's preconditions for further border negotiations and called for "a joint statement to the effect that the sides will build their relations on the basis of peaceful coexistence, firmly adhering to the principles of equality, mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, noninterference in each other's internal affairs, and the nonuse of force, could advance the matter of the normalization of



our relations." 95/ Four days later Soviet party chairman Brezhnev and Politburo member and Defense Minister D.F. Ustinov watched Soviet ground and air exercises in the Far East near Khabarovsk, about 25 miles from the Sino-Soviet border. Brezhnev was reported to have thanked the troops for their "high state of preparedness" and to have been assured by them that they would continue to "vigilantly defend our socialist motherland." 96/

One month later approximately 30 Russian soldiers, supported by a helicopter and military river boats were reported to have crossed the Ussuri River into China for a short time at a place about 200 miles from Khabarovsk. Moscow termed the incursion a mistake that occurred when Soviet border guards pursued 'a dangerous and armed criminal' at night; Peking accused the USSR of an 'organized military provocation'. 97/ Insofar as the incident took place just after a visit to North Korea by party chairman Hua Kuo-feng, only one week before a visit to China by Rumanian leader Nicolae Ceausescu and two weeks before a visit by U.S. national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, it was not implausible to infer in this action a caution by Moscow to Peking to restrain its anti-Soviet activity and to keep the dispute between them within existing bounds. Because the Soviet troops ended up in Yueh Ya in Hulin county, Heilungkiang province, it is also possible that Moscow meant to caution North Korea against endorsing China's position in the Sino-Soviet conflict. 98/

#### Implications of China's Peace Offensive

In the late 1970s Moscow appeared less anxious about a sudden

Chinese threat to Soviet territory in the Far East than about Peking's activist diplomacy aimed, as Moscow saw it, at forming "an anti-Soviet alliance, to undermine the unity of the socialist states, to torpedo the attained level of European detente based on the principles of peaceful coexistence." 99/ When Soviet relations with the United States deteriorated seriously in the spring of 1978, an important element in this shift from Moscow's point of view was the appearance of a nascent U.S.-NATO Europe-China entente--consider, for example, presidential adviser Brzezinski's expressions of concern about the Soviet Union during his May 1978 visit to China, journeys to the People's Republic by West German and British general officers just prior to Brzezinski's trip, the reported support by the Carter Administration for Chinese arms purchases in Western Europe, and the U.S. decision to sell China advanced technology items while high technology sales to the USSR were looked at more coldly. 100/

Adding further to the Kremlin's sense of China's making headway in shifting the global balance of power to the USSR's disadvantage was the signing by China and Japan in August 1978--later that month Chinese party chairman Hua Kuo-feng was to visit Rumania and Yugoslavia--of a treaty of peace and friendship, this document including an article opposing third party attempts to establish in any part of the world a position of "hegemony," a code word in Peking's lexicon denoting Soviet imperialism. In accepting this "pivotal provision," as Moscow termed it, Tokyo was viewed as having "capitulated" in the negotiations in which Peking's objective

was one of "undermining Soviet-Japanese neighborliness." 101/ Earlier, Moscow warned Japan repeatedly against signing an agreement with China, and two months earlier, when Japan and China were preparing for a new round of negotiations, Moscow staged naval, amphibious and other ground maneuvers in the Kurile Islands, whose return from the USSR Tokyo has claimed since Japan regained its sovereignty after World War II. While Soviet cruisers, destroyers, submarines and support ships cruised offshore, naval infantrymen landed on beaches and airborne units dropped by parachute. Although Soviet maneuvers in this area had once been common, no military exercises had been held there since 1970. 102/

That the Kremlin was not just concerned to deter the development of strengthened Chinese-Japanese relations, but saw Japan as militarily resurgent and meant to insure against any thoughts in Tokyo about regaining the islands by force was suggested by a buildup of forces on the islands some months later. The Kremlin saw in U.S. as well as in Japanese behavior in 1978-79 a strong reception to Peking's overtures and finally concluded that Washington and Tokyo were themselves actively seeking to strengthen their bilateral alliance and their relationships with China for the purpose of disallowing the accomplishment of Soviet objectives. Military men in the USSR perceived the construction of "a NATO for Asia." 103/ Prior to the 1979 conflict between China and Vietnam the Kremlin was also seriously worried about the prospect of improved relations between China and India and New

Delhi's acceptance of Peking's view of the world. Good relations between China and North Korea too were apparent. While Moscow pressed upon New Delhi the danger posed by a powerful China, Pyongyang was reminded that it was Peking who sought the retention of U.S. forces in the Pacific area, including South Korea. 104/

If Peking continues to expand its relations and standing in the world in an atmosphere of Sino-Soviet hostility and competition, Moscow may be tempted from time to time to express its displeasure and give warning by orchestrating political-military operations in the border areas, and elsewhere directed at the targets of Peking's diplomacy. Increasingly, though, the Kremlin will probably be put off from martial action along the Sino-Soviet border insofar as Peking presses ahead in its strategic weapons program and modernizes its conventional forces. Under Mao's stewardship China's nuclear weapons program went forward quite slowly while deficiencies were allowed in conventional firepower and mobility and the thesis of people's war retained something of the gospel. Hence, while appearing formidable on paper and continuing to be of concern to the USSR, the relative military balance between the USSR and China between the Cultural Revolution and Mao's death became ever more favorable to the Soviet Union, particularly as Moscow made major investments in strategic and conventional forces development and procurement. Chinese strategic forces at the end of the 1970s included only some 60-80 IRBMs and MRBMs and about 40 TU-16 bombers able to carry nuclear weapons. 105/

This dynamic could be reversed, however, upon decisions by Peking affording deployment of a large number of CSS-4 ICBMs in the next decade; development of a submarine-launched ballistic missile capability; the purchase of major technology and large volumes of conventional armaments from the west; and heavy investment in industrialization and domestic arms production. 106/

Some believe the Kremlin may be prompted to think less of military displays which might reinforce Peking's drive to achieve a stronger military and global political position than of serious preemptive action to destroy China's ability to threaten the USSR militarily. 107/ Barring this drastic step, which would mean acceptance of enormous risk, and aside from hostile political-military operations aimed at other nations that might cozy up to Peking, Soviet armed forces may be most active in the Sino-Soviet conflict on the playing fields of the third world, as they have been in the pursuit of influence vis-à-vis the West since the late 1960s. The Kremlin's competition with Peking has already presented itself on a number of occasions as a factor helping to explain Soviet political-military operations in new nations.

### Footnotes

1. One small, but enlightening example of the retention of these memories and their usage for the purpose of socialization and policy justification, is the story in Izvestiya on August 18, 1978 about certain clashes in the Chinese borderlands a half century ago. FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (August 23, 1978), p. C1.

2. Russians are not ignorant of the civilization formed around Kiev in the Middle Ages, the profound impact of Peter the Great's leadership, or of other important events in their country's past. Rather these developments are prologue to the critical juncture of "October."

3. On allied intervention in the Civil War see Richard H. Ullman, Intervention and the War, 1917-1921: Britain and the Russian Civil War (Princeton University Press, 1968); George F. Kennan, Soviet-American Relations, 1917-1920: The Decision to Intervene (Princeton University Press, 1958); and E. Lederer, "The Red Army During the Civil War," in B.H. Liddell Hart, The Soviet Army (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1956), pp. 33-44.

4. A. A. Grechko, The Armed Forces of the Soviet State (translated and published under the auspices of the United States Air Force, 1975), pp. 15-16.

5. Tass, January 15, 1979, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (January 16, 1979), p. B2.

6. Merle Fainsod, How Russia is Ruled, (Rev. ed., Harvard University Press, 1964), p. 471.

7. This quotation is from Stalin's report to the Eighteenth Party Congress in March 1939, as presented in Khrushchev on the Shifting Balance of World Forces: A Selection of Statements and Interpretative Analysis (special study presented by Senator Hubert H. Humphrey; U.S. Congress, 84th Cong. 1st sess. 1959), p. 1

8. Fainsod, How Russia is Ruled, p. 473; J.M. Mackintosh, "The Red Army, 1920-1936," in Liddell Hart, The Soviet Army, p. 55.

9. O. Edmund Clubb, "Armed Conflict in the Chinese Borderlands, 1917-1950," in Raymond L. Garthoff, Sino-Soviet Military Relations (Frederick A. Praeger, 1966), pp. 20-24.

10. Ibid., pp. 25-26; Geoffrey Wheeler, "Sinkiang and the Soviet Union," The China Quarterly, no. 16 (October-December 1963), p. 58.

11. An agreement ending these hostilities was reached on September 16, 1939. Ibid., pp. 30-35.

12. James L. Bowden, "Soviet Military Aid to Nationalist China, 1923-1941," in Garthoff, Sino-Soviet Military Relations, pp. 54-55. Also see Moscow radio broadcast to China, April 5, 1979, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (April 10, 1979), p. B4.

13. V. D. Sokolovsky, Soviet Military Strategy (3d ed., Crane, Russak, 1968), p. 176.

14. Alexander L. George and Richard Smoke, Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice (Columbia University Press, 1974), pp. 117, 119; W. Phillips Dawson, The Berlin Blockade: A Study in Cold War Politics (Princeton University Press, 1958), p. 281.

15. Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence, p. 504.

16. New York Times, August 16, 1951.

17. New York Times, January 10 and 17 and February 5, 1952.

18. The attacks included the shooting down of a British Lincoln bomber and a mock attack on another British plane on March 12 and firing on a third British plane the following day. New York Times, March 13 and 14, 1953. Of further note, on March 10 two Czech MIGs shot down a U.S. Air Force F-84 aircraft over West Germany. New York Times, March 11, 1953.

19. George Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs (Cornell University Press, 1952), pp. 174-75.

20. New York Times, August 18, 1947; U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States 1947, Vol. 5: The Near East and Africa (GPO, 1971), p. 963.

21. New York Times, May 20 and 22, and June 3, 7, 8, 13 and 14, 1951.

22. Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 1946, p. 7791; New York Times, November 19, 1945.

23. New York Times, April 6 and May 3, 1948.

24. Former CIA Director William Colby has hinted at the development in these years of U.S. covert intelligence links with Sweden.



See William Colby and Peter Forbath, Honorable Men: My Life in the CIA (Simon and Schuster, 1978), p. 103.

25. New York Times, June 17, 1952.

26. New York Times, July 14 and 16, 1952.

27. Donald C. Hellmann, Japanese Foreign Policy and Domestic Politics: The Peace Agreement with the Soviet Union (University of California Press, 1969), p. 31; New York Times, April 29, 1952.

28. New York Times, June 7, 1952.

29. Martin E. Weinschein, Japan's Postwar Defense Policy, 1947-1968 (Columbia University Press, 1971), p. 70; New York Times, June 28, 1952.

30. Weinstein, Japan's Postwar Defense Policy, 1947-1968, p. 72.

31. New York Times, November 25 to December 7, 1956.

32. Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence, p. 620; Mackintosh, Strategy and Tactics of Soviet Foreign Policy, p. 205; also see Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Tactical Nuclear Weapons: European Perspectives (Taylor and Francis Ltd., 1978), pp. 14-15.

33. Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers, pp. 453-54.

34. Robert Slusser, "The Berlin Crises of 1958-59 and 1961," in Blechman and Kaplan, Force Without War, p. 347.

35. Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers, p. 503.

36. Quoted in Mackintosh, Strategy and Tactics of Soviet Foreign Policy, p. 212.

37. George and Smoke, Deterrence in American Foreign Policy, p. 406.

38. Slusser, "The Berlin Crises of 1958-1959 and 1961," pp. 375-76.

39. Regarding Soviet rhetoric on strategic weapons development, see Horelick and Rush, Strategic Power and Soviet Foreign Policy, pp. 50-53.

40. Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence, p. 620.

41. Dwight D. Eisenhower, The White House Years: Waging Peace, 1956-1961 (Doubleday, 1965), p. 340; U.S. Department of the Navy, Director of Fleet Operations Division, Rear Admiral J.C. Donaldson, Jr., "Memorandum to Director of Naval History and Curator for the Navy Department," August 20, 1969; A Chronology of the United States Marine Corps, vol. 3 (U.S. Marine Corps, Headquarters, 1971), p. 41.

42. On July 1, 1960, two months to the day after the U-2 piloted by Francis Gary Powers was shot down over Russia, Soviet fighter planes shot down an RB-47 reconnaissance aircraft over the Barents Sea.

43. Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers: The Last Testament, pp. 487-91.

44. New York Times, September 17, 1960.

45. Slusser, "The Berlin Crises of 1958-1959 and 1961," p. 422.

46. Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers: The Last Testament, pp. 506-07.

47. On Khrushchev's domestic position, see Robert M. Slusser, The Berlin Crisis of 1961: Soviet-American Relations and the Struggle for Power in the Kremlin, June-November 1961 (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), pp. 339-461.

48. Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence, pp. 668-69; Tatu, Power in the Kremlin, pp. 230-33.
49. Tatu, Power in the Kremlin, p. 232.
50. Graham T. Allison, Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis (Little, Brown and Company, 1971), pp. 104-05.
51. New York Times, April 24, 1963.
52. From the Revolution Day speech by A. N. Kosygin, shortly after the Cuban missile crisis. Pravda, November 7, 1962, in CDSP, vol. 14 (December 5, 1962), p. 6.
53. Sokolovsky, Soviet Military Strategy, p. 62.
54. For example, see L. I. Brezhnev, Pravda, November 4, 1967, in CDSP, vol. 19 (November 22, 1967), p. 16; and K. T. Mazurov, Pravda, November 7, 1968, in CDSP, vol. 20 (November 27, 1968), p. 7.
55. International Institute for Strategic Studies (hereafter IISS) The Military Balance, 1962-1963 and 1970-1971 (IISS, 1962 and 1970); Development of Strategic Air Command, 1946-1976 (Headquarters Strategic Air Command, Office of the Historian, March 21, 1976), pp. 97-98, 148-49.
56. U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970's: A New Strategy for Peace, a report to the Congress by Richard Nixon, President of the United States on February 18, 1970 (GPO, 1970), p. 119.
57. Ibid., pp. 121, 123.
58. New York Times, October 13, 1970.
59. East German border guards began harassing allied traffic in late 1970.

60. The Nixon administration appears to have been quite prepared to enter into a major crisis over this matter. In a note to Secretary of State Kissinger, President Nixon related: "I want a report on a crash basis on: (1) What CIA can do to support any kind of action which will irritate Castro; (2) What actions we can take which we have not yet taken to boycott nations dealing with Castro; (3) Most important, what actions we can take, covert or overt, to put missiles in Turkey or a sub base in the Black Sea - anything which will give us some trading stock." Richard M. Nixon, RN: The Memoirs of Richard Nixon (Grosset and Dunlap, 1978), pp. 486-89; also see Marvin Kalb and Bernard Kalb, Kissinger (Little, Brown and Company, 1974), pp. 209-12.

61. Moscow Domestic Service, November 7, 1977, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (November 7, 1977), p. P4.

62. Tass, June 21, 1977, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (June 22, 1977), p. E5.

63. Marshal D.F. Ustinov on the 32d anniversary of the end of the Great Patriotic War, Pravda, May 9, 1977, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (May 13, 1977), p. R4. Following Marshal Grechko's death in 1976, Marshal Ustinov, who is not a military professional, became Defense Minister, was elected to the Politburo, and was awarded the rank of Marshal of the Soviet Union.

64. "Why are the Bases Needed?," Pravda, May 6, 1977, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (May 10, 1977), p. B10. For a

naval complement, see an interview with Admiral S.G. Gorshkov, Pravda, July 30, 1978, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol.3 (August 3, 1978), p. V3.

65. Soviet security relations with China are examined later in this chapter.

66. Robert G. Weinland, "The State and Future of the Soviet Navy in the North Atlantic," in Michael McGwire and John McDonnell, eds., Soviet Naval Influence: Domestic and Foreign Dimensions (Praeger, 1977), pp. 418-21; The Times (London), May 19, 1973. Of further interest, the Soviet warships do not appear to have entered upon the scene until after a visit by Brezhnev to West Germany had been completed and the Soviet party chairman had flown back to Moscow.

67. The Times (London), May 24, 1973; New York Times, May 21-22, 1973.

68. The Times (London), May 24, 1973. On the use of the Keflavik base and importance of Iceland to NATO defense, see Congressional Budget Office, The U.S. Sea Control Mission: Forces, Capabilities and Requirements (GPO, June 1977), pp. 54-55; Frank Leary, "The Anti-Ship Submarine," Space/Aeronautics, vol. 46 (July 1966), pp. 60-63.

69. New York Times, July 17, 20 and 21, 1974; Washington Post, July 17, 1976; R. J. Vincent, "Military Power and Political Influence: The Soviet Union and Western Europe" Adelphi Papers no. 119, (IISS Autumn 1975), p. 10.

70. Notwithstanding flights by U.S. U-2 aircraft out of Britain's Akrotiri air base and radio monitoring by the CIA's Foreign Broadcast Information Service on Cyprus. Lawrence Stern, The Wrong Horse: The Politics of Intervention and the Failure of American Diplomacy (New York Times Books, 1977), pp. 66-73, 102.

71. Ibid., pp. 112-13.

72. Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence, p. 619.

73. See A. Doak Barnett, China and the Major Powers in East Asia (Brookings Institution, 1977), pp. 32-39.

74. See Tai Sung An, The Sino-Soviet Territorial Dispute (Westminster Press, 1973), pp. 74-77.

75. Ibid., pp. 79-80.

76. Also sent to the frontier area was equipment for monitoring Chinese missile and nuclear weapon tests. Thomas W. Wolfe, Soviet Power and Europe, 1945-1970 (Johns Hopkins Press, 1970), p. 467n; Strategic Survey 1969 (Institute for Strategic Studies, 1970), p. 66; Thomas W. Robinson, "The Sino-Soviet Border Dispute: Background, Development and the March 1969 Clashes," American Political Science Review, vol. 66 (December 1972), pp. 1185-86; Barnett, China and the Major Powers in East Asia, p. 44; New York Times, November 22, 1966.

77. Soviet troops had been withdrawn from Mongolia in 1956 after a presence of twenty years. Wolfe, Soviet Power and Europe 1945-1970, p. 467n; New York Times, March 16, 1966.

78. Tai, The Sino-Soviet Territorial Dispute, pp. 84-88. Harold C. Hinton, China's Turbulent Quest: An Analysis of China's Foreign Policy Since 1949 (Rev. ed., Macmillan, 1972), pp. 134-36, 153-56, 160. New York Times, November 22, 1966 and August 12, 1967.

79. Statement published on December 11, 1967 and quoted in Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 1967-1968, p. 22045.

80. John Newhouse, Cold Dawn: The Story of SALT (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973), pp. 164-65.

81. Robinson, The Sino-Soviet Border Dispute, pp. 1186; IISS, The Military Balance 1966-1967, 1967-1968 and 1968-1969 (IISS, 1966, 1967 and 1968).

82. IISS, Strategic Survey 1969 (IISS, 1970), pp. 66-69; Tai, The Sino-Soviet Territorial Dispute, pp. 105-06.

83. Robinson, "The Sino-Soviet Border Dispute," p. 1199.

84. Quoted in New York Times, May 9, 1969. Also see Wolfe, Soviet Power and Europe 1945-1970, p. 467; New York Times, September 12, 1969.

85. Pravda, August 28, 1969, in CDSP, vol. 21 (September 24, 1969), pp. 3-5.

86. New York Times, September 18, 1969; Harold C. Hinton, The Bear at the Gate: Chinese Policymaking Under Soviet Pressure (American Enterprise Institute, 1971), pp. 29-30. Of further interest as regards Soviet seriousness about a nuclear attack upon China is the query by a KGB agent in Washington to a lower level U.S. State Department official at this time about the United States' attitude toward the prospect. Washington Post, February 13, 1978.

87. As quoted in Tai, The Sino-Soviet Territorial Dispute, p. 107; New York Times, September 18, 1969.

88. Louis was also the first journalist to report the Chou-Kosygin meeting.

89. Quoted in Tai, The Sino-Soviet Territorial Dispute, p. 109.

90. IISS, Strategic Survey 1973 (IISS, 1974), p. 67. As Barnett has observed, however, "estimates of forces on the border vary depending on the area on both sides of the border considered." Based on interviews with Western intelligence specialists, he presents a figure of 39 Soviet divisions as being "close to the Chinese border" after 1974. Barnett, China and the Major Powers in East Asia, pp. 77-78, 355. In January 1976 the number of Soviet aircraft deployed near the Sino-Soviet border was reported doubled since 1968. Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld, Annual Defense Department Report FY 1977 (Department of Defense, January 21, 1976), p. 126.

91. Newhouse, Cold Dawn, pp. 188-89.

92. IISS, The Military Balance 1971-1972 (IISS, 1971), pp. 40-41.

93. IISS, The Military Balance 1975-1976 (IISS, 1975), p. 9; and IISS, The Military Balance 1977-1978 (IISS, 1977), p. 9.

94. "Quarterly Chronicle and Documentation," China Quarterly, no. 65 (March 1976), p. 197. Keesing's Contemporary Archives 1977, pp. 28261-62.

95. Pravda, April 1, 1978, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (April 5, 1978), p. C1.

96. Khabarovsk Domestic Service, in Ibid., p. R1; Washington Post, April 6, 1978.



97. Washington Post, May 12 and 13, 1978; New York Times, May 12, 1978.
98. Far Eastern Economic Review, vol. 100 (May 26, 1978), p. 15.
99. Pravda, August 24, 1978, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (August 24, 1978), p. C3.
100. New York Times, May 18, 23, 24 and 28, 1978; Tass, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (June 19, 1978), p. B1; Michael Ledeen, "How the Russian-Chinese War Will Be Fought," New York, vol. 11 (June 19, 1978), p. 52.
101. Pravda, August 25, 1978, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (August 30, 1978), p. M1; and Izvestiya, August 25, 1978, in Ibid., p. M4.
102. Washington Post, June 8, 1978.
103. Colonel A. Leontyev, "A NATO for Asia," in Krasnaya zvezda, December 17, 1978, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (December 19, 1978), pp. A7-11.
104. For example, see Izvestiya, December 16, 1978, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (December 20, 1978), p. C1.
105. IISS, The Military Balance 1978-1979 (IISS, 1978), p. 56.
106. House Armed Services Committee, Hearings on Military Posture and H.R. 10929, Part 1 (GPO, 1978), p. 345; New York Times, November 27, 1977.
107. See Ledeen, "How The Russian-Chinese War Will Be Fought," pp. 54-57.

## Chapter 5

### THE THIRD WORLD

During Stalin's rule Soviet policy toward noncommunist nationalist movements and governments ran in cycles. From the end of the Russian Civil War through the mid-1920s the Bolsheviks sought to accommodate the major European powers and identify Soviet views with the aspirations of Asian nationalism (the united front from above). From about 1928 through the early 1930s a more radical line prevailed. In these years of united front from below, nationalists in the colonial areas and European socialists were bitterly attacked, and the USSR isolated itself from the major powers.

After a brief transition following the 1933 elections in Germany, Moscow threw its support behind popular front governments in Europe and sought alliances supporting Soviet security interests; hence the cause of revolution was temporarily shelved. This perspective remained dominant until 1947 when again the world was divided into two camps. As in the late 1920s and early 1930s, the "national bourgeoisie" in the underdeveloped nations were considered part of the camp of "capitalism, imperialism and nationalism." It was left to Stalin's heirs to accommodate the newly independent nations and nationalist movements in the third world. 1/

Early Experiences: China and Spain

Throughout the Stalinist years Soviet military men were called upon only twice to support policy not dominated by the needs of Soviet military security or concern to establish or maintain communist regimes in adjacent lands. Not surprisingly, these two interventions, in China in the mid-1920s and in Spain during the Spanish Civil War, took place during the two Stalinist periods of accommodation to the noncommunist world, when Moscow saw advantage in distinguishing among nations and groups not sharing its objectives and conceptualization of the world.

In the early 1920s, owing to Soviet interest in Outer Mongolia, a desire to recover their concession in the Chinese Eastern Railway (lost at the time of the Russian Revolution), and the hostility of the powers holding concessions in China, the new Bolshevik government had difficulty establishing relations with the "legitimate" warlord government in Peking. Thus beginning in 1923 Moscow began to support the Nationalist government of Sun Yat-sen in Canton and his political organization, the Kuomintang or Nationalist Party. 2/ From a short term perspective Sun and his followers, who included Chiang Kai-shek, were the group in China willing to deal with the new Soviet regime and reach an understanding with Moscow; in the longer term, a Nationalist government promised to weaken the British, Japanese and other foreign presence in China and to allow greater opportunity for the growth of communism.

This Sino-Soviet alliance was inaugurated by an agreement signed by Sun and Adolph Joffe in January 1923 in Shanghai. Consequently in 1924-25 the National Revolutionary Army and Whampoa Military Academy were established in Canton with the support of Soviet military advisors led, initially, by P. A. Pavlov and, then, by General V. K. Bluecher who became Chiang Kai-shek's chief of staff. Said Sun Yat-sen at the ceremony opening the Whampoa Military Academy:

Six years ago Russia started a revolution and at the same time organized a revolutionary army. This army developed by stages and was able to destroy the old forces and external dangers and achieved great successes. Opening this academy, we follow the example of Russia. In the academy the principles of the building of the Red Army of the Soviet Union will be studied... 3/

Soviet arms and other materiel were also forthcoming, and the number of Russian military advisers providing training and staff support, and who took part in Nationalist military expeditions, rose quickly to more than 1,000. 4/ This assistance, which further included the training of Chinese military men in the USSR, continued until 1927 when the Chinese communists were expelled from the Kuomintang and became victims to violent repression at the hands of the Nationalists. 5/

Moscow did spur political change in China during the mid-1920s, and the Kuomintang did become the dominant force in China, at least for a time. The end result, though, was a great disappointment for Stalin and spurred the shift to the ultra-leftist line that prevailed into the 1930s. This first Soviet disappointment after giving military support to a

nationalist government was not peculiar; it was to be repeated in a number of instances in the 1960s and '70s.

Stalin's other military adventure during the inter-war years was in Spain where the USSR sought to counter Hitler's and Mussolini's support of the Nationalists during the Spanish Civil War. As in China, Soviet objectives were limited and realistically did not include, in an operative sense, the takeover of Spain by communists loyal to Moscow. The basic concern was that the Republicans should not be defeated by forces identified with fascism and receiving important assistance from Germany and Italy. Stalin, though, was mindful to maintain continued good relations with France, which had previously concluded a nonaggression pact and a mutual assistance treaty with the USSR; nor did he want to antagonize Great Britain which, like France, favored the illusion of the Non-Intervention Agreement signed by the powers (including Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and the USSR) shortly after the Civil War began. 6/ At the same time, the Soviet Union also was completely unprepared for general war in Europe as a consequence of the purges then being pressed in the USSR.

Pursuing a low profile, Stalin sent no Lenin Battalion to Spain to match the Thaelmann, Abraham Lincoln, Dimitrov and other international contingents that formed the international brigades supported by the Comintern. Nor did there appear in Spain a Russian equivalent to the German 6,000 man Condor Legion, to say nothing about the approximately 50,000 Italian military personnel who fought for the Nationalists at one

time. Cautiously, Stalin sent several hundred tanks and aircraft along with personnel to operate them; a relatively small number of advisers to provide senior level staff support; and instructors to train Loyalist troops in the use of Soviet military equipment which was provided in quantity. 7/

The relatively small Soviet contribution of military personnel was not trumpeted, and no acknowledgement was made of their participation in combat, although it was plain that they did engage in a number of actions. Stalin also was not willing to escalate the level of Soviet involvement once it was clear that the Republicans were doomed to defeat. As in China, the intervention in Spain ended in failure; although in Spain, Stalin probably never had very great hope once he recognized that Britain, France, and the United States would not restrain Germany and Italy or support the Loyalists in any practical way. The provision of Soviet military men, materiel, and financial aid to the Loyalists is, perhaps, best viewed as having been initially a response to buy the Republicans time and then, rather quickly, a necessary sacrifice.

#### The Transition: Kind Words, Visits, Trade, Aid and Arms

During the transition from victory in Europe to the cold war Moscow looked favorably upon nationalist movements in India, Indonesia, and elsewhere, notwithstanding their "national bourgeoisie" leadership. By late 1947, though, the Zhdanov view of two camps struggling for world

supremacy was dominant. As in the late 1920s and early 1930s, only true believers were acceptable; the united front from above and bourgeois nationalist leaders were again condemned. During the following six years of orthodoxy, communists alone in the underdeveloped lands were considered worthy. Nehru, Sukarno and others like them were viewed as serving the cause of imperialism. 8/

Shortly after Stalin's death in March 1953 and alongside the new "peace offensive", this line began to change. In August Soviet Party Chairman and head of the Council of Ministers Georgi Malenkov spoke favorably about developments in India and Burma, and in September a five year trade agreement was signed with India. By 1955 the Soviets were willing to give strong support to the Bandung Conference and Khrushchev and Bulganin were visiting India, Burma, and Afghanistan. The two "camps" were replaced by two "zones," a "zone of peace" that included the "peace loving" communists and non-communist nations, and the "war zone" of Western nations. 9/ The previous Stalinist line was recognized as self-defeating. Soviet policy now identified the interests of the "neutrals" with Soviet objectives. The Kremlin also looked favorably upon nationalist movements in the colonial areas.

The leaders of the new nonaligned states were pleased to be courted by Moscow. They had rejected the European colonial powers and been put off by U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles' lack of sympathy with their aspirations and U.S. orthodoxy and insistence

akin to the earlier Soviet line that a third way, between East and West, did not exist.

Soviet bloc trade with the underdeveloped nations, which had plummeted in the late forties and early fifties, increased dramatically in the mid-1950s. Playing no small part was the bloc's extension of credits, which totalled \$1.1 billion between 1953 and 1957. 10/ In September 1955 Moscow ventured the first open sale of arms to a noncommunist nation--Egypt--via Czechoslovakia. In this, the Kremlin was prompted by the January 1954 treaty between Turkey and Iraq and Western diplomatic activities leading to the emergence of the Baghdad Pact. In response, the Kremlin sought to obtain a counter group of Soviet allies in the Middle East. President Nasser of Egypt, who bitterly opposed the Baghdad Pact and was unable to obtain arms from the United States, was an obvious choice to receive bloc arms. 11/ The intermediary role played by Prague was not wholly new; it was Czechoslovakia that provided weapons to Israel to support Israeli independence in the late 1940s and delivered arms to the Arbenz government in Guatemala in 1954. Shortly after the agreement with Egypt was announced, a sale of major armaments to Syria by the USSR directly was made known.

So began the flow of Soviet arms to the nonaligned states, which was complemented by the dispatch of Soviet military advisers and training of third world military men in Warsaw treaty nations. Through 1977 the USSR and its Eastern European allies signed arms agreements valued at approximately \$28.5 billion with at least three dozen underdeveloped



nations and brought 47,000 military personnel from these countries to the USSR and Eastern Europe for training. At the end of 1977 roughly 10,250 WTO military advisers and technicians were in the third world. 12/

Kind words, visits, trade, aid and arms, though, were not enough for new nations intending to terminate quickly the vestiges of colonialism or facing crises of violence with neighbors. Very soon, Moscow's new allies sought the support of Soviet military power. The USSR's display of long range jet bombers in 1954-55, the launching of Sputnik I in October 1957, and effusive Kremlin oratory were seized upon by these nations as an implicit warning to their antagonists and as reason to expect strong Soviet backing when they might face danger.

#### Era of False Pretenses

Although things often worked out fairly well for them, until the late 1960s the USSR's new allies in the third world did not fail to notice that in crises Moscow provided them scant support beyond rhetoric. Crises over the Suez Canal (1956), Jordan (1957), Syria (1957), Lebanon (1958), the Congo (1960 and 1964), Cuba (1961) and Laos (1959-62) included small or no exhibition of the Red Star. The basic reasons for this probably included the strong stance taken by the United States in most of these incidents, the strategic nuclear inferiority of the USSR as compared with the United States that was clearly apparent except for a time between 1957 and 1961, and the absence of Soviet conventional military power from places noncontiguous with the USSR.

### The Suez Crisis

The attack by Israel, Britain, and France upon Egypt in October 1956 was the occasion of the first call for help to the USSR by one of the Kremlin's new associates. Mohammed Heikal has written that when Syrian President Shukri al Kuwatly, who went to Moscow during the crisis, said to his hosts, 'you must intervene', Marshal Zhukov "unfolded a map in front of him and said: 'Mr. President, here is the map, look at it, how can we intervene?'" 13/ Of no practical value to Cairo, Soviet support during the period of fighting included only condemnation of Egypt's aggressors and appeals to Nehru and Sukarno to mobilize the Bandung nations as a political force in the crisis. 14/ Nor did the USSR react in any effective way to the closing by British and French naval units of the eastern Mediterranean during the conflict.

Only after waiting until it was clear that the United States would not support military action against Egypt and that Britain, France and Israel were internationally isolated did Moscow issue threats. Thus it was a week after hostilities commenced that Egypt's aggressors were told in letters from Soviet Premier Nikolai Bulganin that they were vulnerable to "rocket weapons;" and it was several days after all hostilities had ceased before Soviet "volunteers" became available. The Soviet and Czech military advisers in Egypt meanwhile had been - withdrawn to Sudan. 15/

These statements made world headlines and were given serious consideration in London, Paris and Tel-Aviv, but they did not determine the direction of events. What the Bulganin letters did was confirm

the expected outcome more immediately, by creating enough additional uncertainty in London and Paris to throw Britain and France firmly into the hands of the United States whose price for supporting them vis-à-vis the USSR was their termination of hostilities against Egypt. 16/ Moscow offered no response to the military alert then declared by the Eisenhower administration, in which SAC aircraft were deployed to forward bases and aircraft carriers bearing nuclear bombers were moved toward closer striking range of the USSR.

Notwithstanding its actual behavior and limited role in determining the outcome of the crisis, the Kremlin was willing to take credit as Egypt's protector and savior and its stock did rise enormously among Arab peoples. President Nasser and other Arab leaders who knew what had happened more precisely were less elated; they understood clearly that the decisive element behind Egypt's rescue was the Eisenhower administration's strong opposition to its two NATO allies and Israel. At a later date Nasser himself implied clearly that Egypt was more in debt to Washington than to Moscow; and in 1959 the Egyptian President said of the USSR's support during the conflict: 'we had not the slightest intimation of support from any foreign state, even the Soviet Union'. 17/ Echoing Patroklos, great friend of Achilles, to the triumphal Hector, Nasser might have told Khrushchev: You were behind the inevitable fate of colonialism and followed the - lead of the United States, "in third place, only at the death." 18/

### The Syrian Crisis

Less than one year later the Syrian crisis erupted. In August 1957 the United States was accused of fomenting a coup against the Soviet-leaning government in Damascus and three U.S. embassy personnel were expelled. The Eisenhower administration then supported a series of actions that appeared designed to bring this result about by another route, including the massing of Turkish troops along the Syrian border, a show of force by the Sixth Fleet, and highly publicized airlifts of arms to U.S. allies in the Middle East. The crisis went through several phases and finally ended in late October. 19/

There had been no Soviet military response to the spring crisis in Jordan when allies of President Nasser in Amman had attempted to overthrow King Hussein. Moscow's support now of Damascus represented the first instance of Soviet political-military support of a third world nation. In late September the cruiser Zhdanov and destroyer Svobodin visited the Syrian port city of Latakia for ten days and in October exercises were staged by the Black Sea Fleet. As with the Suez crisis, though, the timing of these actions indicated Moscow's openness to taking advantage of a situation much more than Soviet willingness to undertake risks on behalf of an ally, notwithstanding Syria's having on its own volition moved closer to alliance with the USSR than any other nation in the absence of war since the founding of the Soviet state. 20/

Major elements of the U.S. Sixth Fleet appeared in the eastern Mediterranean in late August and the U.S. airlift and Turkish military

activities were inaugurated in early September. To these the Kremlin responded on September 10 in the form of a letter signed by Premier Bulganin to Turkish Premier Adnan Menderes. Moscow cautioned that in the event of an outbreak of hostilities between Turkey and Syria, '...the danger of violation of the peace would not be limited to that area alone'. Turkey was risking 'great calamities', the Kremlin announced. The letter asked, moreover, 'how the Turks would feel if foreign troops were being concentrated on their borders'. 21/

Soviet troops were not concentrated on Turkey's borders, however, and the two Soviet warships that were to visit Syria arrived only on September 21, after lazily visiting the Yugoslav port of Split; hence the minimal attention paid by Turkey to Moscow's threats may be better understood. 22/ Moreover, in the interim, between the U.S. and Turkish military actions and the Soviet arrival at Latakia, King Saud of Saudi Arabia had undertaken to mediate the crisis. By the end of the second week of September Saud was reported to have sent a message to President Eisenhower calling for U.S. moderation and Jordan had announced an attitude of non-involvement, declaring Syria 'independent and entitled to do what she likes in her own interests'. 23/

By the end of September the likelihood of violence being directed at Syria appeared exceedingly small. On October 4, though, the USSR launched Sputnik I. This event, a cause of consternation in the West, was greeted with jubilation by Soviet allies, particularly at this point, those in the Arab world. Realizing the propaganda potential and the fact that by this time the risk of war was near zero,

Moscow suddenly reopened the Syrian situation. In an interview given on October 9 to James Reston of the New York Times, Chairman Khrushchev threatened that Turkey 'would not last a day' in the event of war; to which the U.S. Department of State responded immediately that the USSR 'should be under no illusion that the United States ... takes lightly its obligations under the North Atlantic Treaty...'.<sup>24/</sup> Going further several days later, Secretary of State Dulles related that in the event of an attack on Turkey the United States would not conduct a 'purely defensive operation' and the USSR would not be treated as a privileged sanctuary'.<sup>25/</sup> Though further Arab kudos were sought by rhetoric and military exercises carried out by forces in the Trans-Caucasus and the Black Sea Fleet--but which were probably scheduled long before--neither Khrushchev nor any other Soviet Politburo member made a further statement of note. When Arab appreciation was thoroughly milked, Khrushchev ended the crisis by making an unexpected grand appearance at a Turkish embassy reception in Moscow. All told, the Syrian imbroglio gave the USSR an opportunity, as observed elsewhere, "to leap to Syria's defence, to reiterate their claim to a voice in Middle Eastern affairs, and to denounce the 'interventionist fever of American imperialism'." <sup>26/</sup> Throughout the crisis Soviet statements and military activities were timed to gain the maximum propaganda advantage at the least risk.

#### Lebanon and Jordan, 1958

When the United States placed 15,000 soldiers and Marines in Lebanon, and Britain 2,000 troops in Jordan in July 1958, the Kremlin quickly

recognized Washington's seriousness and, well aware of U.S. strategic power and conventional military capabilities in the Mediterranean area, took pains not to act provocatively. President Nasser, who had been visiting Yugoslavia, went to Moscow on this occasion, where Khrushchev, upon being pressed, responded: 'we are not ready for a confrontation. We are not ready for World War III'. Khrushchev probably had in mind the worldwide U.S. military alert and, in particular, the U.S. Strategic Air Command. Hence the Soviet leader refused to issue an ultimatum and told Nasser he would go only so far as to announce maneuvers on the Bulgarian-Turkish frontier, adding the counsel: 'don't depend on anything more than that'. 27/

Notwithstanding consequent harsh Soviet rhetoric directed at the United States, Moscow was extremely careful not to do anything that would lead Washington to seriously believe the USSR would intervene militarily or take any other forceful action. The Soviet maneuvers, which included joint Soviet-Bulgarian operations, Red Army and air activities in the Turkestan and Trans-Caucasian military districts and Black Sea Fleet exercises, were perceived clearly in Washington as a sop to Moscow's Arab allies and were ignored. In response to a letter from Khrushchev which, rather than threatening the United States, referred to the situation as 'extremely dangerous' and fraught with 'unpredictable consequences', President Eisenhower replied that he was 'not aware of any factual basis for your extravagantly expressed fear...'. 28/ Both Moscow and Washington understood Soviet military activity during the crisis as nothing more than theater.

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Earlier, in May and June 1958, when tension had again begun to rise in the Middle East, Moscow had threatened to dispatch "volunteers" if the United States and Britain acted as they did, and in previous months Khrushchev had made frequent mention about Soviet strategic weapons developments and capabilities. 29/ The USSR's friends in the Arab world had been impressed by Soviet behavior during the Syrian crisis and had begun to place stock in Moscow's ability and willingness to militarily intervene on their behalf. Events like the launch of Sputnik III, which weighed over two tons, on May 15, the day after the United States announced a temporary doubling in the size of its Marine force in the Mediterranean, could not have but given heart to these allies. When, coincidentally, Soviet naval units had moved westward through the Baltic in June while U.S. and British naval units were showing their flags in the eastern Mediterranean, the Egyptian news media presented the Soviet action as one 'to maintain the balance of power' -- that is, as an effective counter to the Western naval forces in the Mediterranean. Actually, the Soviet naval action was related to a Northern Fleet exercise. 30/

The July coup in Iraq against King Faisal, which prompted the U.S. and British interventions, was warmly received by Arab nationalists and raised great hopes that similar political changes were close at hand in Lebanon and Jordan. The U.S. and British landings had a sobering effect upon President Nasser and others in the Middle East sharing his views. Moscow's self-stated inability to prevent these actions was a bitter disappointment and once again forced recognition of the reality of U.S. global military power. 31/



The Congo, Laos and Indonesia

Thereafter relations between Egypt and the USSR deteriorated markedly and the scene of the cold war shifted to Africa and Southeast Asia. Premier Patrice Lumumba was Moscow's chosen instrument when the Congo crisis broke out in July 1960 consequent to the mutiny by the Force Publique against its Belgian officer corps and the secession of the mineral rich provinces of Katanga and Kasai. The Kremlin's provision of several dozen Ilyushins (and perhaps 100 trucks and 200 technicians) to Lumumba represented the first Soviet use of transport aircraft outside the bloc area in a crisis. 32/

Moscow ran no risk in this action which was carried out under the guise of international aid to the beleaguered Congo. Many other nations, including the United States, also provided military support to hold that newly independent country together. The Soviet hand, though, was thin. When Lumumba was ousted from power in September 1960 and the United Nations Command closed the Leopoldville airport to prevent the Soviet aircraft from flying troops loyal to Lumumba back to the capital, Moscow was helpless to do anything of consequence to support its client. At this time Lumumba demanded in anguish that UN forces leave the Congo and threatened that otherwise 'Soviet forces will ...brutally expel the UN from our Republic'. 33/ The deposed premier also called upon the USSR to intervene decisively against his internal opponents and the secessionist provinces. Moscow, for its part, completely ignored these appeals. In December 1960 after Lumumba was taken prisoner in the Congo, United Nations units again acted to prevent the Ilyushins from flying supplies to the Lumumbist forces in the Stanleyville area.

Bolder, but not risky, was the air transport of arms to Laos that began in December 1960 and continued with stops and starts into the latter half of 1962, first to the Kong Le-Souvanna Phouma government and then to the Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese in Laos. Notwithstanding a strong Kremlin concern to restrict Peking's influence in Southeast Asia as well as Soviet interest in weakening U.S. influence in the third world, Moscow's behavior in this instance did not evidence willingness to raise the stakes and risk deeper involvement. In initiating the use of Soviet transport aircraft, pain was taken to relate that "whereas two or three months ago the U.S. government made some effort to camouflage its...actions in Laos, the United States... has recently become to all intents and purposes a party to military operations...against...the government of Laos." 34/ After the Kennedy administration threatened military intervention in Laos in April 1961, the USSR supported the establishment of a cease-fire. And when 5,000 U.S. soldiers and Marines and an accompanying aircraft carrier task force were sent to Thailand in spring-early summer 1962, the only hope Khrushchev could offer to Hanoi and the Pathet Lao was that "the Americans may fight fifteen years if they want to, but it will not help." 35/

Also in 1962 Soviet military men were active in Indonesia, supporting President Sukarno's campaign to wrest control of West Irian (Dutch West New Guinea) from the Netherlands. As a leader of the new bloc of nonaligned nations, Sukarno had been assiduously cultivated by the USSR following Moscow's shift in policy toward the third world after Stalin's death. High level Soviet official visits,

trade, aid and armaments were lavished on Djakarta; nor did the Kremlin back away after a major rebellion centered in West Sumatra broke out in 1958. Sukarno's campaign against the insurgency was aided heavily in the field by Soviet arms deliveries that included fighter and bomber aircraft as well as an assortment of naval vessels. Providing political support were a naval visit by warships from the Soviet Pacific Fleet, further economic aid and, in January 1960, a visit by Nikita Khrushchev himself. 36/

Moscow felt strong reason to support Indonesia in the "confrontation" over West Irian in 1961-62. In early 1962 Sukarno adopted a "two camp" image of international relations. Among the "newly emerging forces" were Indonesia and the other underdeveloped lands as well as the socialist nations; opposing their interests were the "old established forces"--that is, the West. 37/ Sukarno also gave strong support to the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). When Moscow learned that Indonesia might be defeated in the conflict with the Dutch after violence had begun, the Kremlin, we are told by Khrushchev, allowed Sukarno the services of Soviet pilots and submarine officers. 38/ However, the Kremlin knew that the United States did not support the Hague on this matter. Rather the opposite. Washington was, itself, then attempting to court Sukarno to slow, if not reverse, his alignment with the East and was leading a virtual campaign to press the Dutch to capitulate. 39/

Nevertheless, the Kremlin sought to keep its military involvement secret; the objective, it would seem, was not to present the Hague with the visible threat of Soviet military power, but to bolster Sukarno's

forces so they might be more effective and to reinforce Indonesian political confidence. The Soviets probably were concerned not to cause Washington to view the situation as one of East-West confrontation, thereby compelling the Kennedy administration to reverse direction and back the Dutch. Looking past a possibly reinforced Soviet position in Djakarta, the Kremlin had better reason to worry about escalation and exposure of its weak military position in Southeast Asia; hence Moscow's concern when the Indonesians leaked word of their assistance to the United States. 40/

Between these involvements in Laos and Indonesia and the 1967 Middle East war, Soviet armed forces were not turned to as an instrument for supporting noncommunist governments or national liberation movements, even to the small extent as had occurred between 1956 and 1962. One apparently small exception was a brief and minor Soviet airlift of small arms to Congolese insurgents in December 1964. These flights were reportedly made from Algeria and Egypt to the Sudan, from where the rebels operated after they were driven out of Stanleyville. 41/ When this minimal effort quickly proved futile, it was terminated rather than expanded upon.

#### Forward Deployment and Challenge

Brief surreys into the Mediterranean by small task groups of Soviet surface combatants were made in the mid-1950s, and in 1958 Soviet submarines began to use a support facility in Vlone, Albania. This

regular access to a Mediterranean port was lost, however, in 1961 as a casualty of the Sino-Soviet rift. Also at this time, the small surface combatant presence which had been slowly increasing became erratic. A continuous naval presence in the Mediterranean was initiated in 1964, and by 1966 the USSR maintained there an average daily presence of 12 ships. 42/ These vessels were also much more capable than Soviet warships deployed in earlier years, both in ship-to-ship and ship-to-air combat. Less visible was the development in these years of a Soviet naval infantry and airborne capability.

Russia has always been a great land power; less well known, for the last several hundred years it has also maintained one of the world's largest navies. After the Second World War Stalin continued to support a diffuse naval construction program allowing large balanced fleets including heavy and light cruisers, destroyers, submarines and, in the future, aircraft carriers. 43/ When Stalin died this program was in mid-stream; for example, the carriers that were to be built had not yet been laid down. Nikita Khrushchev then reversed course dramatically, firing Navy Commander-in-Chief Admiral N.G. Kuznetsov and scrapping or delaying plans for the procurement of major classes of surface warships and submarines designed for defense against conventional naval attack and invasion of the USSR. Said Khrushchev later: "Gone were the days when the heavy cruiser and the battleship were the backbone of a navy. It still made a beautiful picture when the crew lined up smartly at attention on the deck of a cruiser to receive an admiral or call on a friendly foreign port. But such ceremonies were now just an elegant luxury.... So we

relegated our surface fleet to an auxiliary function, primarily for coastal defense." 44/

Believing the principal threat to the USSR was surprise nuclear attack and constrained by other budgetary demands, Khrushchev and his new navy chief, Admiral S.G. Gorshkov, oversaw a revamped construction program that focussed heavily on nuclear-propelled, missile-armed submarines and light surface warships, and land-based naval aviation. The forward deployment of the Soviet Navy, which was decided upon in principle by the early 1960s, was prompted by the increased range of U.S. carrier-borne aircraft and the U.S. deployment of ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs). Concern about U.S. submarine development also led to the Moskva-class helicopter-carrier program being put back on track. In the early 1960s, Admiral Gorshkov was successful in selling the thesis that a much larger surface navy was after all necessary to counter the threat presented by seaborne U.S. nuclear strike forces. Thus when the USSR did begin to deploy its navy forward in the mid-1960s those forces proved increasingly modern and well-equipped for their essential mission of supporting deterrence and defense against U.S. nuclear attack. 45/

Also significant in the early 1960s, the USSR reconstituted a naval infantry force. Along with the other changes wrought by Khrushchev in the mid-1950s was the disbanding of the navy's amphibious landing units (comparable to the U.S. Marine Corps) and the virtual writing off of a role for seabased ground forces in a future conflict. As written elsewhere,

many factors would explain the revision a decade later, including "the personal intervention of Admiral Gorshkov (himself an amphibious commander during World War II), a low-keyed revolt of the admirals against the downgrading of the Soviet navy's role in amphibious warfare, linkage between the naval infantry and Sino-Soviet and Warsaw Pact relations, a Soviet trend toward strategic flexibility, changed Soviet views on the utility of amphibious operations in the nuclear era, and Soviet ambitions in the Third World." 46/

The Soviet naval infantry numbered about 6000 men in the mid-1960s and grew to 12,000 troops by the end of the decade. 47/ In the late 1970s, regimental units and amphibious lift ships were assigned to each of the USSR's four fleets (two regiments were serving with the Pacific fleet.) These elements have participated in regular Soviet naval exercises and, from time to time, have been deployed otherwise outside of home waters. Their principal shortcoming in carrying out distant operations has always been a lack of accompanying air support. (The Moskva- and Kiev-class carriers have been equipped essentially for anti-submarine warfare, not air interception or ground attack.)

Soviet airborne forces, always a part of the Red Army, were maintained in size during Stalin's rule and did not experience the trauma suffered by the navy during the Khrushchev years; although the USSR's military airlift capability remained limited through the 1950s.

The introduction into the air force inventory of the AN-12 medium transport in the early 1960s and then, more importantly, AN-22 heavy lift aircraft beginning about 1967 represented major increases in Moscow's ability to bring ground forces as well as large amounts of military materiel to bear rapidly at a distance. 48/ Also observed during these years were a greater emphasis on airborne operations in Soviet exercises and procurement of new models of air mobile artillery, armored vehicles, anti-tank, and other weapons. 49/ Again, though, the lack of tactical air support in noncontiguous areas remained a severe military deficiency where airborne units or transport aircraft could expect violent resistance to their landing or operations.

In many instances, however, Moscow could reasonably conclude that the likelihood of Soviet armed forces units being fired upon, even in otherwise conflictive situations, was small or non-existent insofar as: friendly territory could be overflown and landing areas were secure; or antagonists did not want to so antagonize the USSR, considering its nuclear forces, ability to interdict shipping, and the possibility of Soviet arrangement for at least the temporary forward deployment of fighter aircraft. When only equipment was being airlifted, the risk of violent counteraction could be greatly discounted. Real danger to Soviet military men was to be expected only when they might be ordered to take part in actual military operations.



Also in the 1960s, Soviet military thinkers began to question the doctrine that any violent conflict between the United States and USSR would inevitably escalate into a strategic nuclear war. "Obviously," Colonel General N.A. Lomov wrote in mid-decade, "the probability of the development of limited war into world nuclear war, in the event of the involvement in local conflicts of nuclear powers, is always great and, under certain conditions, it may become inevitable" (italics added). <sup>50/</sup> An important implication of this perspective, of course, was that there were circumstances in which escalation to world war was not inevitable. A similar inference could be derived from Marshal Zakharov's perspective, related in 1968, that 'escalation is more likely with the participation in the local war of states having nuclear weapons, and especially when the vitally important interests of these states are infringed upon in such a war'. <sup>51/</sup>

Most important perhaps was the 1968 edition of Soviet Military Strategy by Marshal V. D. Sokolovsky. Unlike its two preceding editions, published in 1962 and 1963, the last edition of this important volume said that the "USSR will render, when it is necessary, military support ... to people [third world nations] subject to imperialist aggression." <sup>52/</sup> Clearly the marshal and his colleagues were not welcoming an opportunity for nuclear conflict; nor could the new reference have been meant to refer only to Soviet military assistance, which had been given to third world nations for more than a half decade before this volume's first publication. It can be concluded that even if nuclear war may have continued to be considered

"inevitable" if the U.S. and USSR became violently engaged in a third world conflict, it was also the view, now, that there was a great deal the superpowers could do in the way of providing military support to allies without the United States and Soviet Union necessarily having to become engaged in combat operations vis-à-vis each other. 53/ Surely the theoretical risks were even less where it might be calculated that the United States would not similarly respond to a conventional Soviet military intervention. The breakout from the conceptualization that there was no range of decision but only a dichotomous choice between capitulation and nuclear war allowed a Soviet form of flexible response to developments in the third world.

These changes in capabilities, deployment, and evolution in thinking about conflict between the superpowers formed a more conducive environment to Soviet military involvement in foreign conflicts than had existed in the past. The June War marked a major change in Soviet willingness to use armed forces to support third world nations. Moscow's strong relationship with Egypt, Syria and other Arab nations and Israel's preemptive attack beginning the 1967 war brought the Kremlin over a hurdle; afterwards the USSR proceeded to use military power to influence events on the African Horn and in the Persian Gulf and then in South Asia and West Africa.

#### The June War

- Between early May 1967 and the end of the 1967 war in the Middle East on June 10, the number of Soviet surface combatants in the Mediterranean

increased from three to thirteen and the overall number of Red Star naval vessels rose to approximately 40 ships. During the conflict Soviet warships, for the first time in a crisis situation, took up positions extremely close to U.S. carrier groups, as they did a British carrier force also in the Mediterranean. At one point a U.S. aircraft carrier (America) task force was also reportedly harassed. And on the last day of the war, when Israeli forces moved toward Damascus, Premier Kosygin warned over the Hot Line that if the Israelis continued to advance, the Soviet Union would take 'necessary actions, including military'. 54/

If Soviet behavior was generally circumspect and restrained in light of the enormous disaster that befell the Arab side in the June War, these actions nevertheless indicated that the USSR was willing to make a serious combat deployment during a crisis somewhat distant from the USSR and to counter a major U.S. military presence. What Moscow might have done if the Israelis had actually moved on Damascus will never be known. However, insofar as the men in the Kremlin in 1967 appeared less inclined to bluffing and had then available a greater capability to project conventional military power than did Khrushchev, in this event Moscow might well have done something seriously more martial. In contrast to President Eisenhower's virtual dismissal of Soviet threats during the Suez crisis, Premier Kosygin's message was viewed with gravity by the Johnson administration, which believed that Soviet airborne units would have intervened if the Israelis had continued toward Damascus. 55/

Nevertheless, the general view in the immediate aftermath of this conflict was that the value of U.S. aid to Israel was much greater than the value of Soviet aid to the Arab side. After all, the United States placed on increased alert or redeployed during the June War three aircraft carrier task groups and a marine battalion in the Mediterranean, as well as several army and air force units in Europe. And once the conflict had begun, Washington provided firm diplomatic support to Israel and substantial armaments. While President Nasser found it expedient to blame the Arab defeat on the United States' support of Israel, going so far as to say that U.S. aircraft took part in the initial air strikes, it was more widely observed that Moscow did not have the ability to prevent or, in any case, permitted its clients to suffer major losses of territory and an overwhelming political disaster. This image did not endure, however.

The USSR followed up its actions in the 1967 war by not immediately withdrawing the forces it had surged into the Mediterranean, by otherwise increasing the size of its permanent naval deployment in these waters, by sending a squadron of TU-16 bombers to Egypt on a visit, by sending several thousand Soviet advisers to recreate the Egyptian and Syrian armed forces, and by providing Egypt and Syria a massive resupply of arms. By early July Soviet AN-12 aircraft had made approximately 350 flights to the Middle East. Even more important, the Kremlin continued to intervene militarily on behalf of these allies.

Thus in July 1967 Soviet warships began a series of visits to Egypt's port cities of Alexandria and Port Said, seemingly to

deter continuing Israeli attacks in these areas; and in October, when an Egyptian Soviet-supplied Komar-class patrol boat sank the Israeli destroyer Eilat, Soviet ships paid an immediate visit to Port Said as a demonstration of support for Egypt and to influence Israeli retaliatory action. Indeed, the Soviet navy established a virtually permanent presence in Egyptian waters.

Particularly important about the sinking of the Eilat, this action was perceived by many as a dramatic demonstration of the capabilities of Soviet warships and military technology. The U.S. presence in the Mediterranean area lost something of its impact as questions arose about the vulnerability of Sixth Fleet carriers and other U.S. surface warships to missile-equipped Soviet cruisers and destroyers. Moscow moved to raise its prestige even higher in December by again sending a squadron of TU-16 bombers on a visit to Egypt, these aircraft overflying Cairo and carrying out live bombing demonstrations from bases in Luxor and Aswan. 56/

Of further aid to the image of ascending Soviet military power in the region was the establishment in Egypt of extensive shore facilities for the replenishment and repair of Soviet ships and submarines, and the basing of patrol and reconnaissance aircraft. In extending this support, President Nasser of Egypt is reported to have

come to the conclusion it was to the advantage of the whole non-aligned world for Russia's naval presence in the Mediterranean to be strengthened. He had hoped that some sort of parity might be reached between the Soviet fleet and the American Sixth fleet.

By this means the Mediterranean would cease to be an American lake, and if, bearing in mind the claim once made by [Prime Minister of Israel Levi] Eshkol that the American navy in the Mediterranean was Israel's strategic reserve, Egypt and other Arab governments tried at a later date to urge a reduction in America's naval strength there, they would have some cards in their hands. Balanced reductions by both super-powers would have some attraction for the Americans, whereas as long as they enjoyed a virtual monopoly there was no inducement for them to cut down. 57/

These developments aided the growth of a new perspective, decidedly less generous to the U.S. military presence and more favorable to the image of Soviet power in the region. American military dominance in future conflict situations no longer was taken for granted. Instead, the question was asked whether U.S. forces could defend themselves in a conflict, much less provide adequate support to allies and friends as in the past. The image of a "balance" of power between American and Soviet forces developed. Misleading as the term "balance" may be as regards the missions of the two forces, and questionable as it may have been in any case, the thought nevertheless persisted among U.S., Soviet, and Middle Eastern decisionmakers, and was of consequence.

Egypt, Syria and other Soviet friends were delighted with this new image of Soviet power; they themselves helped to cultivate it by replaying the theme that Soviet military forces were a "deterrent" to aggressive U.S. behavior and that a "balance" did, in fact, exist. For example, two days after the coup in Libya in 1969, Tripoli radio announced that what was otherwise regarded as a

coincidental nearby Soviet naval presence had deterred British intervention on behalf of the deposed regime. 58/ There is also no question that Israel was concerned about this movement toward "balances," although Israelis did not seem to doubt that U.S. forces in the region were still the stronger. 59/

#### Air Support and the Defense of Egypt

While the Soviet naval presence in the Mediterranean was being built up further and afforded Egypt and Syria a certain amount of protection against Israel, Soviet airmen became directly engaged in fighting in North Yemen. At the Khartoum Conference in August 1967 President Nasser agreed to withdraw the Egyptian servicemen fighting on the side of the Republicans, and King Faisal of Saudi Arabia promised to curtail aid to the Royalists. When the fighting did not end, the Republicans were lent in November 1967 the assistance of a number of Soviet combat aircraft—and Russian airmen to fly these planes; while armaments and other supplies were airlifted to Hoveida by AN-12 transport aircraft that logged about 170 flights. Soviet military advisers were sent to aid Republican ground troops. 60/

Similar Soviet interventions seem to have occurred in 1970-71 in Sudan and Ceylon and in 1973-74 in Iraq. 61/ Each of these efforts was directed at helping a government in power suppress a domestic insurgency. In Sudan, Soviet tactical aircraft and helicopter pilots and ground advisers were reported to have taken an active role against non-Arab separatists; Soviet-piloted aircraft and helicopters also appear to have been sent to Ceylon in support of the Bandaranaike govern-

ment's suppression of a rebellion by the militant People's Liberation Front; and in Iraq, Soviet bomber and reconnaissance aircraft appeared to aid the effort against the Kurdish minority. 62/

Most demonstrative, though, was the USSR's willingness in January 1970 to provide Egypt a complete air defense system, including the services of more than 200 pilots and 12,000-15,000 missile crewmen. These personnel manned approximately 150 fighter aircraft and some 75-85 surface-to-air missile (SAM) sites, and took over complete control of six airfields in Egypt; Moscow was prompted to do this by the Egyptian armed forces' inability to themselves prevent deep penetration bombing raids by Israeli aircraft and the Kremlin's recognition that at risk were the political survival of President Nasser and the Soviet position in Egypt and the Arab world generally. By mid-1972 when President Sadat ordered the expulsion of Soviet operators and advisers, their number had risen to 21,000. Supporting the emplacement of these air defense forces in Egypt was an airlift of about one hundred flights in the first several months of 1970. 63/

Soviet military men were not sent to Egypt for show. Red Army missile crews were almost certainly responsible for shooting down a number of Israeli planes, and Russian pilots were allowed to engage Israeli aircraft. By mid-April 1970, Egypt's strengthened defenses and, it would seem, the fact that Russians rather than Egyptians had to be fired upon, led Israel to terminate the deep penetration raids. Thereafter the Israeli air force attacked Egyptian ground targets only as far as the Suez Canal battle area. A further effect of the massive Soviet presence was greater confidence imparted to



Egyptian military men who showed improved tactical abilities. <sup>64/</sup> The Nixon administration, meanwhile, though it perceived this Soviet action as the first threat presented to it by Moscow, did not back up Israel in a way offsetting the USSR's increased support of Egypt. <sup>65/</sup> To the contrary. In March, Washington had determined to postpone the delivery of F-4 Phantom jets to Israel, in part to slow down the arms race in the Middle East, but also so as not to further strengthen Egypt's dependence on the USSR. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger was extremely concerned about the growing Soviet military presence in Egypt and its implication for the utility of American military power in the Mediterranean area. <sup>66/</sup>

Moscow might have backed off in exposing Soviet military men to air combat after a number of Russian piloted aircraft were shot down in late July 1970. The cease-fire in the Middle East in early August and then forward movement on Egyptian territory of SAM sites left this unclear. What Moscow almost certainly did not expect, though, was that President Sadat, who succeeded Nasser upon the latter's death in October 1970, would be less grateful for what Soviet military men had done for Egypt's defense than he was in demanding that the USSR provide the Egyptian armed forces greater numbers of and more sophisticated armaments for its own use. Rather than having obtained a strong long-term alliance with Egypt, Moscow found in July 1972 that it had merely satisfied Cairo's needs momentarily.

The Ali Sabry affair, the communist attempted coup in Sudan in 1971, and the Soviets' heavy-handed style of dealing with the

Egyptians in their moment of need infuriated Sadat and other Egyptians who were concerned to maintain national pride and who opposed increased Soviet influence in the Arab world generally. Although Soviet warships were allowed continued access to Egyptian ports for several years thereafter, in 1972 Cairo took over those facilities at Mersa Matruh that had been under construction as a Soviet naval base and terminated the presence in Egypt of the Soviet naval reconnaissance, anti-submarine warfare and air-to-surface missile launching bomber aircraft, notwithstanding the great importance of these planes to Soviet naval operations in the Mediterranean vis-à-vis the Sixth Fleet.

#### Political-Military Thinking in Moscow in the Early 1970s

In March 1971 the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was convened in Moscow. The restoration of control in Czechoslovakia and renewed resignation in Eastern Europe, the improvement in Soviet relations with the United States, West Germany, France and other NATO nations, the military stabilization of the Sino-Soviet border, and the communist victory foreseen in South Vietnam--all of these developments allowed greater Soviet stridency in the third world, as did increased Soviet strategic and conventional military capabilities. Previously there had occurred movement in U.S. policy circles toward acceptance of parity in strategic armaments and the withdrawal of 100,000 U.S. troops from Europe in the 1960s to meet Southeast Asian needs, as followed by gradual U.S. withdrawal from South Vietnam. The block obsolescence of World War II-built U.S. warships was also then in mid-rush,

and U.S. defense budget authorizations for strategic, general purpose and mobility forces were rapidly declining. The Kremlin may have seen in these developments a weakening of U.S. will for new interventions in the third world and a moment of advantage to the USSR for such activity itself.

The Soviet position in the third world in early 1971 also seemed politically strong. Close relationships were being developed with India and Ceylon; the USSR had begun to rebound in Africa since the ouster of Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana in 1966 and other displeasing military coups in West Africa in the mid-1960s; Soviet prestige in the Middle East was high; and the Allende government was in power in Chile. This was in sharp contrast to the mid-1960s when the USSR saw not only the reversals in Africa, but also an uncertain position in the Middle East and South Asia, U.S. military interventions in Southeast Asia and the Dominican Republic, and important setbacks in Indonesia, Algeria, and Brazil.

Hence Chairman Brezhnev reported to the 24th Party Congress that "imperialism is being subjected to increasing pressure from the forces that have sprung from the national liberation struggle." "A good many countries" in Asia and Africa, he related, "have taken the noncapitalist path of development," while in Latin America "important changes" were perceived "taking place in the life of a number of countries" (that is, in Chile, Peru and Bolivia). <sup>67/</sup> At the 23d Party Congress in 1966 Brezhnev affirmed only a very vague "continued all-round support of the people's struggle for final liberation from colonial and neo-colonial oppression." <sup>68/</sup> In 1971 the Soviet party

chief promised "a further step-up in the activity of the worldwide anti-imperialist struggle" and "the active defense of peace." 69/ The Soviet presence in Egypt provided an exemplary backdrop for such statement.

The marshals of the USSR remained cautious about trumpeting this renewed political confidence about developments in the third world and apparently greater openness within the highest Party circles to engagement on a broader scale in this arena. In the major armed forces statement following the Congress, a book by the Soviet Defense Minister Marshal Grechko, titled On Guard for Peace and the Building of Communism, discussed developments in the third world only in a perfunctory manner.

Again, the "national liberation movement" was said to be "growing and broadening," and a "significant number of states were perceived on "the non-capitalist path of development." Grechko offered to them, however, only "the sympathy of all the progressive forces." 70/

In discussions of airborne and air transport units, no suggestion was made about their finding themselves into former colonial lands. Given its context, nothing could be made of the statement that Soviet military aviation could ferry "troops and heavy military materiel great distances." 71/ About the navy, Marshal Grechko only said: "it honorably represents our nation on the expanses of the world ocean and has repeatedly demonstrated its increased combat capabilities with great conviction." 72/ General of the Army A.A. Yepishev, head of the Main Political Administration of the armed forces, did relate Soviet military power to political change in underdeveloped nations explicitly, in an article published in May 1972, but his emphasis was on the significance

of newly capable Soviet forces to the environment of the third world, not the active use of military units to achieve specific objectives.

Said the Marshal:

It must be seen that socialism's military might objectively assists the successful development of the revolutionary liberation movements and that it hinders the exportation of imperialist counterrevolution. In this lies one of the most important manifestations of the external function of the armed forces of a socialist state. 73/

Navy Commander-in-Chief Gorshkov, though, seized upon the thoughts drawn out at the 24th Congress to argue at length that the Soviet navy could importantly support distant state interests of the USSR in time of peace as well as Soviet defense. In February 1972 there began a series of eleven articles signed by Admiral Gorshkov in the Soviet navy journal Morskoi Sbornik. Under a series title, "Navies in War and Peace" (*italics added*), the Soviet navy was said to be "making a significant contribution to improving mutual relations between states and peoples and to strengthening the international influence of the Soviet Union." 74/ A full installment was devoted to "Navies as Instruments of Peacetime Imperialism," wherein readers were informed that the navy, "while representing a formidable force in war...has always been an instrument of policy of the imperialist states and an important support for diplomacy in peacetime..." 75/ Going on, the Admiral related, "It would be difficult to find an area on our planet where U.S. leaders have not used their pet instrument of foreign policy—the Navy --against the progressive forces of the peoples of various countries." The Soviet navy, he concluded, "is a powerful

factor in the creation of favorable conditions for the building of Socialism and Communism, for the active defense of peace, and for strengthening international security." 76/

In the minds of Soviet naval leaders --"Navies in War and Peace" is assumed by many to have been a group effort--the use of seapower as a political instrument was not a diversion from their larger responsibility for national defense. Naval diplomacy rather was accepted as an important mission, finally able to be fulfilled as a result of the increased capability of the Soviet navy; which is not to say that these articles were not also a polemic arguing for more ships and resources for the navy. By means of this series, Soviet navy men meant among other things, to show their enthusiasm and to elaborate how a navy can further state interests in peacetime by its capabilities "to vividly demonstrate the economic and military might of a country beyond its borders," "to suddenly appear close to the shores of different countries," "to support 'friendly states'," and "to exert pressure on potential enemies without the direct employment of weaponry." 77/

One issue of debate in the West following the publication of these articles was whether this series represented naval advocacy--that is, an attempt to influence discussion among non-naval political authorities about the navy's requirements and roles in war and peacetime--or "what the Soviets refer to as a 'concrete expression of doctrine,' i.e., a work rationalizing particular tenets of military doctrine that apply to the navy." 78/ About the navy's role in peacetime as a political instrument, it is also possible that Gorshkov

was neither taking part in a debate nor stating an accepted view of naval activity as much as he was attempting to seize ground about which not much explicit thought had been given--that is, to educate and lead an open-minded audience inclined to move in a direction supportive of naval attitudes and interests. From this perspective, Gorshkov was not so much arguing as he was attempting to show the way.

Soviet military and civilian intellectuals were also giving thought to the topic of armed forces usage as a political instrument. Under the auspices of the Institute of World Economics and International Relations of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR a study titled Military Force and International Relations was conducted, it would appear, in 1971-72 and was published in 1972. A printing of 10,000 copies was ordered. V.M. Kulish, a retired member of the Soviet general staff and director of the study, of which there were six other authors, concluded from the analysis: "Thus military force is one of the most important foreign-political means available to states and its role and effectiveness, together with other means, will depend upon the particular international-political situation and upon the specific balance of forces existing in the world or region." 79/ "At the present time," it was argued elsewhere in the monograph,

the principal means for restraining imperialist aggressors in all regions of the world is the ability of the USSR to deliver nuclear missile weapons to any point on the earth's surface. This method for restraining imperialist military expansion is extremely important from the stand-

point of preventing an all-out nuclear war. However this form will not always be effective in those situations that could develop into limited wars, even though the interests of the Soviet Union and other Socialist Bloc countries might be directly involved.

In connection with the task of preventing local wars and also in those cases wherein military support must be furnished to those nations fighting for their freedom and independence against the forces of internal reaction and imperialist intervention, the Soviet Union may require mobile and well trained and well equipped armed forces. In some situations the very knowledge of a Soviet military presence in an area in which a conflict situation is developing may serve to restrain the imperialists and local reaction, prevent them from dealing out violence to the local populace and eliminate a threat to overall peace and international security. It is precisely this type of role that ships of the Soviet Navy are playing in the Mediterranean sea. 80/

It was readily understandable why, in the early 1970s and afterwards, very clear and explicit statements of this sort were not forthcoming from Brezhnev or other members of the Soviet ruling circle. The Kremlin had no interest in making comments endangering accommodations being sought with the West. That detente did not mean to the Kremlin an end to struggle with the West for position and influence is clear. 81/ Nevertheless, Moscow was concerned to avoid military confrontations with the United States and controlled its rhetoric in a way designed to support an atmosphere of detente. Provocative remarks and gratuitous boasting have generally continued to be shunned.

#### Red Star at Sea: Beyond the Mediterranean

Forward deployment of the Soviet navy continued to be pressed through the late 1960s and levelled off only in the early 1970s. The



average number of ships flying the Red Star daily in the Mediterranean was up to 30 by 1968, 45 in 1970, and 56 in 1973. 82/ In conjunction with the Soviet navy's appearance in the Indian Ocean in 1968 a number of littoral ports were visited. In these waters, too, a "presence" was gradually developed, the average daily number of ships being roughly 3 in 1968, 10 in 1970, and 25 in 1973. 83/

The deployment of Soviet warships in distant waters not only strengthened the USSR's image as a great power and obtained the appreciation of nations wanting to use a close relationship with the Soviet Union to support their own foreign policies; it also provided Moscow the prerogative of a rapid military appearance at the scene of a crisis or other event in which it was interested without having to obtain permission for aircraft overflight or refueling. Following the experiences of the June War and later naval support of Egypt, the Kremlin used the instrument of port visits and naval presence frequently during the next several years to support friends in the third world.

The first major cruise by Soviet Pacific Fleet warships into the Indian Ocean in 1968 saw visits paid to quite a number of ports along the littoral. Of those visits, one to Aden in South Yemen, which had recently celebrated its independence, took place just after the outbreak of a rebellion by extreme left-wing elements of the ruling National Liberation Front. 84/ Although the visit probably had been planned well in advance, the friendly presence of a Soviet cruiser, destroyer, submarine and oiler at this time was almost certainly well received by the government of President Quahdan al-Shaabi as a

symbol of recognition and backing by the USSR which had earlier provided armaments to this new nation. Insofar as it is difficult to believe Soviet authorities were unaware of the potential significance of this visit to South Yemen's beleaguered government, it may be suggested that the USSR was pleased to take advantage of these circumstances -- that is, to be on the scene militarily supporting the al-Shaabi regime, thereby increasing the prospect of strengthened relations with South Yemen.

Between 1962 and 1969 Moscow helped construct a deepwater port in Somalia. Arms aid and training assistance were initiated in 1965. When the Somali army seized power in October 1969 after the assassination of President Abdirashid Ali Shermarke, a period of instability ensued while a new regime led by President Mohammed Siad Barre consolidated power. As a demonstration of the USSR's friendship toward this new order and, perhaps, a deterrent to those who might have intended something different, a Soviet cruiser and destroyer began a series of visits to Somali ports in December 1969. Unusually long visits were also paid to Somali ports in 1970 and 1972, the first beginning ten days prior to an announcement that a counter-coup had been thwarted, the second sandwiching a United Nations Security Council special session on African colonialism held in Mogadiscio. The 1972 visit was taken as a demonstration of Soviet support for revolutionary governments (for example, Somalia) and movements of national liberation (for example, in Mozambique and Angola). 85/

In this same area of the world, Soviet warships, in the spring of 1973, demonstrated support for Iraq in its border dispute with Kuwait. In late March of that year Iraq seized a piece of Kuwaiti territory in the area of its port and naval base at Umm Qasr. Other Arab states mediated the dispute and, in the end, played the decisive role in resolving it, Baghdad being forced to withdraw its claims. Meanwhile, though, Moscow allowed visits to Iraq by a four ship Soviet naval squadron and navy commander-in-chief Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union S.G. Gorshkov in early April, supposedly in commemoration of the signing of a treaty of friendship and cooperation by the USSR and Iraq the previous year. 86/ Yet the visit by Admiral Gorshkov was not announced until just a few days before his arrival and the Soviet warships arrived without prior announcement.

Although it is plausible that these visits were planned earlier, the conclusion cannot be escaped that the Kremlin was at least willing to appear militarily in solidarity with Baghdad; earlier a Tass statement had broadcast the official Iraqi version of events, blaming Kuwait for the situation. 87/ At the same time, however, this was not an instance of the USSR's egging Baghdad on or seeking to intimidate Kuwait and its supporters very much. Indeed, behind the scenes the Kremlin appears to have pressed for accommodation by Iraq and was interested to cool the situation down. In this Moscow would seem to have been generally concerned to maintain the fragile front of Arab unity. Of particular importance may have been the planned Arab offensive against Israel which, although it eventually took place in October, was scheduled

at one time for as early as the second half of May 1973. 88/

Directly related to Arab solidarity and, it would seem, the preparations at this time for war against Israel was the Soviet sealift of Moroccan troops from Oran in Algeria to Syria in April. 89/ The two Soviet amphibious ships carrying out this operation may also have been escorted by Soviet combatant vessels--that is, surface warships or submarines. The sealift was not only a service to the Arab cause; the use of Soviet naval vessels to transport Arab troops across the Mediterranean was insurance for their safe arrival. Soviet LSTs appear to have sealifted additional Moroccan contingents to Syria in early Summer 1973, after the planned offensive against Israel had been delayed until September-October. Likewise in 1973, Red Star amphibious vessels appear to have transported, from Aden to the eastern border region of the PDRY, South Yemen troops on their way to support the Dhofar rebellion in Oman. 90/ Here again, Soviet naval vessels afforded service and safety.

The USSR also began in the early 1970s to engage in naval diplomacy on behalf of friends in West Africa. Warships appear to have been used to support Soviet interests in West Africa initially in 1969 when a squadron of four vessels transited waters near Ghana's coast while Soviet and Ghanaian authorities were negotiating the release of two Soviet fishing trawlers and their crews accused of smuggling arms to opponents of the regime in Accra. The two trawlers were seized in October 1968, when Soviet-Ghanaian relations were already poor as a result of Moscow's strong backing of Kwame Nkrumah, then resident in Guinea, who had

been overthrown in a coup by the Ghanaian military in 1966. The two trawlers seem to have been fishing not as much in Ghanaian coastal waters as in Ghanaian politics, there being strong reason to believe they were delivering cargo to pro-Nkrumah dissidents.

In mid-February 1969 two Soviet missile destroyers, a submarine and an oiler paid an "official" and noticable visit to Conakry in Guinea, the first visit to a sub-Saharan West African port and one which followed a serious turn in the Ghanaian investigation of the trawlers' activities. There followed a long thirteen day passage, rather than the more normal four day transit, to Lagos in Nigeria where a port visit was paid on very short notice. Whether or not the movements of these Soviet ships--first, south to West African waters and, then, their lingering between Conakry and Lagos--influenced the Ghanaian authorities, Moscow appears to have meant for them to do so. 91/

A close Soviet relationship with Guinea developed after Guinean independence in 1958 and rejection of continued close relations with France. Military assistance from the USSR was received by Conakry as early as 1960. In November 1970, in consequence to President Sekou Toure's strong support for the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde Islands (PAIGC), which was also headquartered in the Guinean capital, Portuguese military men made an amphibious attack on Conakry. Moscow immediately established a small naval presence off West Africa which, whatever the initial intention, became a permanent deployment. As a deterrent to future Portuguese military action directed at Guinea, this deployment served to support President Toure and also continued PAIGC

operations out of Guinea. 92/

Five months later the image of Soviet military power was again invoked in West Africa, this time in Sierra Leone where the government of President Siaka Stevens was infirm. After avoiding a planned coup, this regime faced considerable uncertainty for a time. Previously Sierra Leone had accepted "positive neutralism" and the Freetown government had given neighboring Guinea strong support following the Portuguese attack on Conakry. The instability in Sierra Leone, in turn, led quickly to the deployment there of Guinean troops and the signing of a defense treaty by Conakry and Freetown. Thus in May 1971 Moscow sent a destroyer to visit Freetown to reinforce the legitimacy of the Stevens government and to take advantage of a special opportunity to strengthen Soviet relations with Sierra Leone. 93/

These timely visits by Soviet warships to South Yemen, Somalia, Iraq, Guinea and Sierra Leone all took place in the absence of on-going major violence. Also not present was any U.S. military effort or serious political involvement. While the local parties beneficiary to these visits were perhaps made more secure, the USSR incurred neither military risks nor political costs. In each action the USSR supported the recognized government of a sovereign nation, as it did in Egypt between the 1967 and 1973 wars, and Sudan, Ceylon, and Iraq during those years. In addition to strengthening Soviet relations with these governments, this support directly or indirectly helped Moscow to obtain access to foreign installations for purposes related to broader Soviet military interests. In Egypt, Somalia, Guinea, South Yemen, and Iraq, Soviet warships were able to make convenient use of shore

facilities; and the first three Soviet naval aircraft were based at least intermittently for reconnaissance operations, thereby making Soviet military capabilities in the Atlantic, Indian Ocean and Mediterranean more efficient and effective. In late 1978, one year after the USSR lost its military position in Somalia as a result of Moscow's support of Ethiopia in the 1977-78 Ethiopian-Somalian conflict, Soviet naval reconnaissance aircraft began to make flights from South Yemen (they had done so once before in 1975). Such flights were also made from Angola following Soviet military intervention in 1975-76 in that nation's civil war.

The sealifts of Moroccan and South Yemeni troops in 1973 were barely noticed; here, too, the risk of hostile action by regional actors was minor and the United States was, in the context of each, uninvolved. That these Soviet actions caused umbrage in Israel, Oman or Saudi Arabia was of small concern, we may presume. Although the USSR showed support for Baghdad in the 1973 Iraq-Kuwait imbroglio, it handled that situation politically in a way causing small disturbance in the Arab world.

#### Superpower Confrontations

Of a very different sort were the Jordanian crisis (1970), Indo-Pakistani war (1971) and the 1973 Middle East war. Like the 1957 Middle East war and the fighting between Egypt and Israel in 1969-70, each of these other incidents included serious inter-state conflict and potential or actual superpower confrontation of a serious order. It is, perhaps, too much to say that as a result of these events there evolved an acceptance in the United States and the USSR

of tacit rules and limits of superpower behavior in third world crises. A common pattern in U.S. and Soviet behavior related to the structure of these situations did become apparent, however. Faced with similar circumstances in the future, political leaders in Moscow and Washington might well perceive dangers and interests quite like their predecessors. Similar actions thus might be evidenced again.

Most important, as suggested elsewhere, "it appears permissible for one superpower to support a friend against the client of another superpower as long as the friend is on the defensive strategically; the object [though] must be to avert decisive defeat and restore the balance, not assist the client to victory. The issue of who began the war is not central; it is the strategic situation of the client at the time of the contemplated intervention that counts." 94/ "Fact of possession," as James McConnell has said,

remains as the key variable, because it has the distinction of almost always being present, for the simple reason that in almost every conflict between clients there is a winner and a loser; you have the client of one superpower seizing a value that was in the possession of the client of the other superpower before the conflict erupted. And since in terms of the balance of power what belongs to the client also belongs to his protector, we find the patron of the loser gaining ever greater relative strength of will as the difficulties of his client become manifest. 95/

In short, the prospect of one superpower's client suffering a disaster wrought by the client of the other tends to be counterbalanced by an asymmetry in will favoring the patron of the state on the defensive.



What was of further importance was the USSR's increased willingness in an absolute sense to stand by its allies militarily and to take risks on their behalf, and a relative decline in U.S. willingness to militarily support its allies in crises between superpower clients. In part, the change in U.S. behavior may be related to the experience of the Vietnam War and consequent disillusionment among Americans about the use of military power as a foreign policy instrument. There is no escaping the fact, however, that U.S. policymakers confronting the USSR in crises beginning in the late 1960s and continuing into the 1970s were also increasingly more impressed by the strategic and conventional military capabilities at the Kremlin's disposal than were their predecessors. Indeed the equilibrating crisis behavior by the superpowers referred to above--as compared with past U.S. dominance in third world crises--appears strongly related to these changes in respective superpower military capabilities and change in attitude among Americans. Soviet military activities in the 1967 Middle East war and the air defense of Egypt have already been considered. We turn now to those other third world crises in the early 1970's that took place in the Middle East and South Asia.

In September 1970, after the Jordanian military encountered stiff resistance while attempting to destroy the armed Palestinian presence in Jordan, Syrian armored units intervened in the fighting. Soviet military advisers appeared to accompany Syrian formations to the Jordanian border and members of the Nixon administration believed that the Kremlin led the Syrians down this path or at least supported

Damascus in its decision. Either way, Moscow was considered responsible insofar as it was believed that Syria would not have launched the operations without Soviet approval. 96/

Eventually, King Hussein's position became desperate enough for the United States and Israel to seriously contemplate military intervention. At this point the United States had moved into the eastern Mediterranean two U.S. aircraft carrier task groups (Saratoga and Independence) and Marine amphibious task force. A third aircraft carrier (John F. Kennedy) and a second Marine force were also steaming toward the Mediterranean; U.S. Air Force tactical and transport aircraft had been moved to Turkey; and U.S. Army units in Europe and in the United States had been alerted for rapid deployment. While a Soviet destroyer tracked the JFK in the west two anti-carrier warfare groups were formed around the Independence and Saratoga; the amphibious groups also were watched closely. In the June War only one Soviet warship tracked each U.S. carrier. A judgment has been expressed elsewhere that the Soviet ships were "in excellent position to launch a surprise attack" and had "a reasonable chance of taking significant offensive action before a U.S. counterattack could have full effect." 97/

Still, Moscow sought not to escalate the crisis; hence no additional Soviet warships were redeployed from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean, a cruiser en route from the Caribbean to the Mediterranean was made to proceed at a leisurely course, some submarines departed the Mediterranean, naval air reconnaissance by aircraft then in Egypt was not carried out, and no airborne units in the USSR were ever alerted.

When Hussein's forces remained unable to reverse the course of battle themselves, Israel prepared to intervene in their behalf; and in this event, if the USSR or Egypt took military action against Israel, Washington assured the Israelis, the United States, too, would enter the conflict. 98/ The growing certainty that President Nixon would not allow the regime in Amman to be turned out by Syrian military force led to Soviet statements to U.S. officials that representations were being made to Damascus toward the objective of achieving a Syrian withdrawal; which is what U.S. intelligence also reported and what, in fact, Syria did. 99/ If the USSR had given Damascus its full backing, the Syrian air force, instead of being held in abeyance throughout the crisis, might have been committed and the Jordanian counterattack which pressed the Syrian armored units back might have been nullified. Instead of this leading to a Syrian-Palestinian victory, the Kremlin appeared to fear the prospect of conflict between Israel and Syria and possibly Egypt. If Syria (and Egypt) were again decisively defeated by Israel the position of the USSR in the Arab world would have become untenable. If Israel was to suffer a defeat, the prospect was for U.S. military intervention which, if decisive, also threatened that result. To threaten Israel, though, was to risk the exposure of a bluff or the consequences of becoming involved militarily against a regionally powerful U.S. ally. To compel the United States to desist from militarily supporting Israel meant, too, the risk of a bluff of the consequences of an attack upon U.S. armed forces.

The Kremlin preferred Syrian withdrawal and the defeat of the Palestinians over the acceptance of any of these risks, Soviet naval

activity in the Mediterranean notwithstanding. Indeed, insofar as the deployment of Soviet warships did not avoid a continuing tough U.S.-Israeli posture, the inference might be made that these forces represented a bluff or cause of potential envelopment undesired by Soviet leaders. That the Kremlin would rationally risk military conflict with the United States because its clients' offensive was blunted is difficult to believe. The real military purpose of Soviet anti-carrier operations during this conflict was to insure against offensive U.S. military action against Syria (and Egypt), which Washington did not contemplate.

Soviet armed forces acted somewhat similarly during the Indo-Pakistani war in December 1971. Some months before, the Soviet Union and India had signed a treaty of friendship, and Moscow and New Delhi were then strongly allied. Adding to Moscow's interest was China's hostility toward India, support for Pakistan, and burgeoning relationship with the United States. 100/ The United States also was committed to Pakistan, a SEATO and CENTO member and the nation through which Secretary of State Kissinger had recently transited on his way to Peking.

Several days after the fighting began a Soviet anti-carrier group was dispatched from the Pacific Fleet, seemingly to counter the presence in the Indian Ocean then of the British aircraft carrier Eagle and commando carrier Albion. A second Soviet surface group was deployed into the Indian Ocean following the entry of a U.S. task force formed around the aircraft carrier Enterprise. These two Soviet squadrons reinforced two ships already stationed in the Indian Ocean and their replacements that, earlier, had been dispatched routinely. The Soviet

deployments served not as military back-up to India in its one-sided battle against Pakistan, but as counterweights to the Western military presence. Similarly, about 15 MIG-21 and TU-16 aircraft drawn from those forward deployed in Egypt were reportedly sent to India in response to the transfer of U.S. built combat aircraft from Jordan and Libya to Pakistan. 101/

Although India's dismemberment of Pakistan clearly was a disaster for the government in Islamabad and the Nixon administration was outraged by the Indian offensive, the United States did favor independence for East Pakistan. Thus although faced with a rapid Indian military fait accompli in East Pakistan, Washington was not disposed to militarily intervene on this account. What led to the deployment of the Enterprise was intelligence suggesting India might seize the moment and attack West Pakistan. Of further importance was President Nixon's and Secretary Kissinger's concern to be perceived by China as militarily capable and responsive to the interests of friends. 102/

Ominously, though, the Soviet ambassador to India, Nikolai M. Pegov, told New Delhi, the CIA reported, that the USSR 'will not allow the Seventh Fleet to intervene' and 'would open a diversionary action' in Sinkiang if China intervened against India. 103/ The movement of Soviet troops closer to the Sino-Soviet border during the war could have had no other purpose but to tie up Chinese forces and deter Peking from intervention. 104/ On the other hand, U.S. intelligence also indicated that the Kremlin did not expect either the United States or China to intervene in the conflict. Probably strengthening the Kremlin's willingness to allow a strong verbal

commitment by its representatives in New Delhi was a judgment that the level of U.S. military power able to be sensibly deployed to the Indian Ocean was not great enough for the Nixon administration to risk combat and allowed only for a demonstration. What is also possible, Moscow might have been willing to offer New Delhi a commitment on the understanding that India did not intend military operations against West Pakistan. From the outset of the conflict, Soviet diplomacy sought only a cease-fire and recognition of the independence of East Pakistan.

Practically speaking the United States was, in fact, unable to do very much for Pakistan militarily. The moral ambiguity over the issue of East Pakistan disallowed a sense of defending Pakistan as a nation on that score; while in the west, the scene of potential fighting was far inland while the U.S. carrier group was quite alone in the Indian Ocean. Had things developed that India did actually attack in the west and U.S. aircraft were in some way made to support West Pakistan--but yet not attack India--while Islamabad remained on the defensive, it is exceedingly doubtful that any Soviet military attack on the Enterprise group would have taken place. The asymmetry of motivation combined with the new fact of U.S. military action would have placed an enormous burden of risk upon the USSR. Whether any U.S. military action could have meant the difference between the success and defeat of an Indian offensive in the west is something else.

As things worked out, India had good reason to be pleased with Soviet behavior. Aside from Moscow's verbal commitment, the tactics of Soviet naval diplomacy were wise. India, which held the upper hand with

Pakistan throughout the war, did not want to provoke the West more than it had to; hence New Delhi could not have objected that the Soviet deployments followed first British naval units and then the deployment of United States warships into the Indian Ocean. Soviet actions on the Sino-Soviet border, no doubt, also increased New Delhi's confidence and sense of command over the situation. As a coda, after the conflict ended Moscow was quick to offer the talents of Russian sailors to the new government of Bangladesh for the clearance of port areas made inaccessible during the fighting. 105/

#### The October War

The 1973 war in the Middle East portrayed vividly the distance the USSR had traveled during the previous decade in military capability and willingness to support important friends in the third world during crises, notwithstanding the fact or prospect of serious U.S. military involvement. Clearly Moscow had foreknowledge of the Arab attack and was not caught unaware by the outbreak of hostilities. 106/ Although the Kremlin was then seeking further agreements with the United States on a range of interests and valued the aura of detente, to retain its position in the Arab world it was willing to make a mockery of the Basic Principles of Relations agreement signed in Moscow in May 1972 by President Nixon and General Secretary Brezhnev, which stated: "the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. attach major importance to preventing the development of situations capable of causing a dangerous exacerbation of their relations... [and] will do their utmost to avoid military confrontations..." 107/

Realizing Egypt's and Syria's determination to open hostilities, the USSR acted to insure the success of this effort. Hence, prior to the conflict SCUD missiles were sent to Egypt to support Arab strategic

deterrence and additional armaments were sealifted and airlifted; Moroccan units were sealifted to Syria; and the Kremlin worked to strengthen Arab unity at the diplomatic level. After hostilities were opened, it was the USSR, not the United States, which first initiated related naval activity in the Mediterranean and began to airlift military supplies to its clients. The essential naval mission was to keep close account of and offset the influence the Sixth Fleet might attempt to exert on the course of the war. Major choke points in the Mediterranean were kept under close watch and Soviet warships and submarines were concentrated near U.S. aircraft carriers and amphibious units. Between the outbreak of the war on October 6 and the U.S. DEFCON 3 alert on the evening of October 24, the number of Soviet surface combatants deployed from the Black Sea fleet to the Mediterranean rose from 17 to 26 units. Deployments of additional submarines and support ships brought to 80 the total number of Soviet naval vessels then in the Mediterranean.

In the week following the U.S. alert, the Soviet naval force grew to 96 units, including 34 surface combatants and 23 submarines. Of the period from October 25-31, the U.S. Chief of Naval Operations at the time observed later: "I doubt that major units of the U.S. Navy were ever in a tenser situation since World War II ended than the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean was for...that week." 108/ At the same time, seven Soviet airborne divisions were on alert--three of which had been alerted earlier in the war--and planes which previously had been airlifting armaments to Egypt and Syria appeared in a state of readiness for



troop transport. 109/ Of further concern was the establishment of an airborne command post over southern Russia, the possible presence on these Soviet amphibious warships in the Mediterranean of naval infantry, and the entry into the port of Alexandria of a Soviet freighter with cargo emitting neutrons, inferred by many to be nuclear warheads for Egypt's SCUD missiles. 110/

During the conflict Soviet pilots made 934 flights to Arab nations, transporting in AN-12 and AN-22 aircraft some 15,000 tons of materiel; meanwhile, several times this volume was sealifted by Soviet freighters. The U.S. airlift which began on October 13--the Soviet sealift was initiated at the start of hostilities and the Soviet airlift on October 10--included 566 trips by Air Force C-5 and C-141 aircraft and the delivery of about 23,000 tons of supplies. 111/

Yet the Kremlin also sought in very important ways to contain and terminate the conflict; not primarily to protect the Arabs, we may presume, but to minimize Arab demands upon the USSR and the risk of a superpower confrontation with the United States. Only after Egypt and Syria had scaled down their objectives considerably and had determined on a strategy of using military means to achieve limited territory, after which a switch was to be made in favor of exerting political pressure on Israel, did Moscow begin to support Arab war planning. Nor was the Kremlin enthusiastic about even these Arab war plans. The military option was taken at Arab and not Soviet initiative. Moscow continued to hope for and seek out a peaceful settlement in the Middle East. 112/

Within hours of the outbreak of hostilities, Soviet representatives began to call upon Egypt and Syria to halt the offensive. Although certainly Cairo and, it would seem, Damascus too would not hear of this, Moscow continued to press for a cease-fire, antagonizing further President Sadat and straining Soviet-Egyptian relations severely. 113/ Cairo was already displeased by the Kremlin's earlier refusal to transfer MIG-23 aircraft and certain other armaments to the Egyptian armed forces and by the evacuation of Soviet dependents from Egypt several days prior to the Arab offensive: indeed, President Sadat was infuriated by this lack of confidence. Sadat also perceived that the USSR did not resupply enough armaments to Egypt during the conflict. Soviet unwillingness to provide the benefits of its satellite reconnaissance to Egypt was still another source of anger. 114/

As in the 1967 war, Algerian President Houari Boumedienne went to Moscow to press the Kremlin for strong support. The Tass description of these talks as having taken place in a "friendly frank atmosphere" (*italics added*) hinted at significant differences between Arab demands and Soviet supplies. 115/ One important consequence of this Arab dissatisfaction was the conclusion reached by President Sadat and, to a lesser extent, President Assad of Syria that a strategy including dependence on the USSR and hostility toward the United States poorly served their interests. Another was the complete expulsion of the Soviet military presence from Egypt in 1976, at which time, too, President Sadat terminated the 1971 Soviet-Egyptian Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation.

President Sadat's view of the Soviet resupply of Egypt and Syria during the war as having been carried on in a manner meant to insure a lesser Arab capability and dependence on the USSR is most reasonable not in the context of Moscow's wanting to retain leverage for access and continued influence in Egypt and Syria, but from a perspective of Soviet concern to preserve as much as they could of detente and to limit the degree of superpower confrontation during the conflict. 116/

Lacking an ability to project naval power ashore, Moscow did not see Soviet naval activities in the Mediterranean as a threat to Israel, but as a counter to the Sixth Fleet's ability to otherwise intimidate Egypt and Syria; this naval action thus was critical to Soviet credibility in the Arab world. The Soviet airlift and, particularly, alert of several airborne divisions may be related to the first signs of Arab retreat and Israel's bombing of Damascus. 117/ What led to a direct Soviet warning to Israel on October 12 was Israel's intentional bombing of Soviet transport aircraft in Syria and sinking of a Soviet merchant vessel in the port of Tartus. This, a Tass statement announced, the USSR "cannot regard indifferently;" the "continuation" of such acts, the statement went on, "will lead to grave consequences for Israel itself." 118/ Earlier Moscow had let go the bombing of its cultural center in Damascus with mere condemnation and a walk-out from a U.N. Security Council meeting by Soviet Ambassador Y. A. Malik. Even while the USSR was threatening Israel, though, Moscow was seeking to obtain a cease-fire. Moreover, the

Soviets went out of their way to say that "no one in the Soviet Union, including the government, has anything against Israel as a state." 119/

But what of Moscow's alert of four additional airborne divisions and Hot Line message to President Nixon on October 24? 'I will say it straight', Chairman Brezhnev then related, 'if you find it impossible to act together with us in this matter, we should be faced with the necessity urgently to consider the question of taking appropriate steps unilaterally'. 120/ And, not to be forgotten, the Soviet government statement on the previous day warning Israel again "of the gravest consequences." 121/

The setting on the 23d was Israel's taking full advantage of the initial Egyptian violation of a first cease-fire; that on the 24th was the breakdown of a second cease-fire and Israel's complete entrapment of Egypt's Third Army on the West Bank; and all of this took place after Kissinger and Brezhnev personally had hammered out a cease-fire agreement in Moscow on October 20-21, during which the Soviets had obtained Cairo's acquiescence to direct talks between Egypt and Israel. President Sadat finally agreed to this only after Brezhnev gave his personal assurance that, if necessary, the USSR would act unilaterally to insure Israel's observance of the cease-fire. 122/ Presumably, this assurance was given on Brezhnev's understanding that there would be no cease-fire unless Israel agreed to one and that the United States would be able to obtain Israel's acquiescence to the agreement, and would be able to force Israel to terminate any breach on its

part. Further, so the Soviets may have reasoned, if Israel did violate the cease-fire and the United States could not stop the Israelis, then Washington would understand the USSR's acting unilaterally to defend Egypt. Prior to sending the Hot Line message, the Kremlin sought a joint U.S.-Soviet intervention.

In the end Moscow did precipitate the situation it sought most to avoid: a military confrontation between the United States and the USSR, raising the danger of superpower conflagration, weakening the ambience of detente and endangering important Soviet political objectives in East-West relations. That Moscow went as far as it did, though, was not the result of eagerness to demonstrate Soviet military power or realization of an opportunity to undermine U.S. credibility among American allies. The operative factor would seem to have been much more the Kremlin's credibility in the Arab world where it had a two-decade-old investment and where the long-term stakes were perceived to be substantial. When Brezhnev sent his Hot Line message, Cairo was in a state of panic and the Soviets were in the position of having helped to arrange the circumstance of an Arab military disaster. The thought of Israelis, after their encirclement of the Third Army, advancing in the direction of Cairo, was almost certainly a Soviet consideration. Not to render Egypt practical support at this time was also to play into Peking's hands; Brezhnev may also have had in mind Khrushchev's demise after his handling of the Cuban missile crisis.

As during the earlier phases of the conflict, the Kremlin's behavior following the second cease-fire's violation was not reckless, but highly calculated. The Soviet objective on the 24th was not to send ground forces to Egypt in order to intervene militarily against Israel, although Moscow most certainly was open to the idea of a joint Soviet-American intervention essentially directed against Israel. Rather the Kremlin was concerned to signal the United States that it could not allow any greater degree of Arab defeat and that the United States either had to make Israel realize this or itself force Israel to observe the cease-fire. From the Soviet perspective, if the United States did not so behave, then either it was acting with duplicity or would have to understand unilateral USSR intervention in this instance. The U.S. nuclear alert was coupled with U.S. behavior aimed at satisfying Moscow's objective. Moreover, unlike in the Cuban missile crisis, "the American military command structure did not appear to consider that the actual use of strategic forces had become a serious possibility. Elaborate decentralized preparations--the preliminary tuning of forces for combat--were not triggered. The response to the alert order was minimal and pro forma. . . ."123/

All of this said, though, it is important to recognize just how far the Kremlin was willing to go in supporting its clients. Notwithstanding Arab disappointment, Soviet military support of Egypt and Syria vis-à-vis Israel--an important U.S. client--was very great and the Kremlin did choose to risk detente and face the United States firmly rather than lose all credibility in the Arab world and, perhaps too, other important

clients in the third world. That Moscow did not relish this behavior and did not act out of ideological passion or out of sympathy or vindictiveness like an ancient Athena or Apollo is important. Moscow's behavior is not to be denied, however. What it represented was a newly consolidated reference point for future U.S.-USSR crisis management, one very different from the outcome of the Cuban missile crisis.

#### After the October War

In the aftermath of the 1973 Middle East war Soviet military leaders besides navy men became more confident about the USSR's ability to use military power to successfully influence events in the third world. In early 1974 Marshal Grechko himself took up the theme of "expansion of the internationalist functions of the Soviet armed forces." "At the present stage," he wrote for the journal Questions of CPSU History,

the historic function of the Soviet armed forces is not restricted merely to their function in defending our motherland and the other socialist countries. In its foreign policy activity the Soviet state actively and purposefully opposes the export of counterrevolution and the policy of oppression, supports the national liberation struggle, and resolutely resists imperialist aggression in whatever distant region of our planet it may appear. The party and Soviet Government rely on the country's economic and defense might in fulfilling these tasks.

\* \* \*

The development of the external functions of the socialist armies is a natural process. It will continue... 124'

These lines closely approximated passages in the Defense Minister's book, The Armed Forces of the Soviet State, which was published in the spring of

1974 in a first edition of 50,000 copies; a second edition of 200,000 copies was published in 1975. 125/ These statements did not constitute a greater degree of commitment to third world allies; but they did indicate internalization within the Kremlin--Grechko, after all, was a full Politburo member--of the normality of Soviet armed forces operations in distant regions. No longer was such activity considered exceptional or tenuous; Soviet capabilities thus were fully recognized. It was perhaps for this reason as well as out of consideration for detente that Grechko did not discuss in these writings the peacetime roles of individual services or types of forces, but considered only their combat capabilities.

On the other hand, Admiral Gorshkov, only a Central Committee member and having a more specific interest than Marshal Grechko, was not at all silent about the navy's role in supporting Soviet foreign policy. Building upon "Navies in War and Peace," he--and presumably members of his staff--was the author in 1976 of Sea Power of the State, a full length book of well over 300 pages that was given a printing run of 60,000 and honored by a nomination for the M.V. Frunze prize. These circumstances provide strong reason for believing that the views expressed in this volume, particularly those on the navy as a policy instrument, either represented the thinking of Soviet political leaders or were acceptable to them. On the topic of the Soviet navy's peacetime missions, Gorshkov neither altered his views nor developed his case radically, in substance or tone. Sea Power of the State is noteworthy rather for its elaboration and somewhat greater explicitness. Again Gorshkov touted



the specific characteristics of the Navy as a military factor which has been used in peacetime to show the economic and military might of the State beyond its borders and the fact that of all the branches of the armed forces, the Navy is to the greatest degree capable of operationally supporting the State interests of the country beyond its borders. 126/

In addition to graphically representing to the world Soviet military and technological prowess and valuably supporting, by routine visits, USSR friendship with other nations, the Soviet navy was seen especially useful for the achievement of political objectives in discrete situations. "In many cases," said the Admiral, "naval demonstrations have made it possible to achieve political goals without resorting to an armed struggle merely by exerting pressure through one's own potential power and by threatening to initiate military hostilities." 127/ Particularly in mind was the third world. Thus the United States was said to rely on the Sixth Fleet as "the main means of combatting the national-liberation movement of the Arab peoples," while the U.S. Seventh Fleet was "being widely utilized in the struggle against national-liberation movements, democracy and progress in Southeast Asia." 128/ Further, Gorshkov went on, "it is difficult to find an area in the world where the American politicians have not employed their Navy against progressive forces." The Soviet navy was an instrument for "suppressing the aggressive aspirations of imperialism, of deterring military adventures, and of decisively countering threats to the security of peoples on the part of the imperialist powers." 129/

Sea Power of the State did not advocate or announce a greater degree of naval demonstration or frequency of intervention over that exhibited in recent years. The summary inference to be drawn was that in the arena of political-military diplomacy Gorshkov was writing with pride about an empirical record to which further pages would be added as a matter of course, given continuing internal instabilities abroad and international tensions.

Despite the significant use of Soviet aircraft in the 1970s--particularly tactical combat and strategic transport planes--as a political instrument, senior Russian airmen remained silent about the peacetime contribution made by Red air forces to Soviet foreign policy. Perhaps drawing closest to acknowledging this role was deputy defense minister and chief marshal of aviation P. S. Kulakhov, when, on aviation day 1979, he related that "in peacetime, as in war, Soviet airmen, on finding themselves in a complex situation, show courage, bravery and high moral, political and psychological qualities." 130/ To be inferred, perhaps, from the near universal focus on war fighting in the rhetoric of Soviet airmen is budgetary satisfaction coupled with disinterest in political-military operations, their concern not to allow peacetime missions to influence procurement budgets, or their nonrecognition of the significance of air units to Soviet foreign policy. Unlike the navy, Soviet air forces have no continuous peacetime roles excepting those steady state deployments in Eastern Europe and along the Sino-Soviet frontier. Insofar as air units are turned to only intermittently for policy support in the third world, this function may figure less in the minds of senior airmen than it does for navy men.

Not surprisingly, Soviet political leaders remained reticent about their armed forces' activities in the third world. Statements of the obvious as, for example, those by Defense Minister Grechko and of self-interested enthusiasm and exultation by Admiral Gorshkov would have served no useful purpose had they been articulated by Chairman Brezhnev or other Soviet political leaders. Although the USSR was interested in strengthening its position in the third world and felt strong competition with China, the Kremlin also sought a non-conflictive atmosphere in its relations with the West. Soviet armed forces might continue to support foreign policy objectives in Africa and the Middle East, but boastful, even prideful, remarks about Soviet military capabilities and activities in the third world could be expected to make arms control, trade and other important negotiations with the United States and Western Europe more difficult.

Moscow was probably also concerned not to raise expectations among clients too much, wanting instead to be able to pick and choose carefully where it might become engaged heavily without suffering recriminations from misled friends.

Those statements cited above by Marshal Grechko, it is worth noting, did not appear in Pravda, Izvestiya, Krasnaya zvezda or as a Tass interview; nor were they part of any verbal announcement. They appeared in a specialist's journal and were deeply embedded in The Armed Forces of the Soviet State. It may be concluded that these were not meant as announcements to the world but as parts of a holistic treatise on

the role of the armed forces in the Soviet state and in the international relations of the USSR, prepared for those in the USSR attentive to Soviet defense policy.

General Secretary Brezhnev, in his report to the 25th Soviet Party Congress in 1976, stated no new military commitment to third world allies; he only promised "support to peoples who are fighting for their freedom." 131/ Rather than welcoming a contest of will and power with the West in influencing the course of the new nations, he exhorted "strict observance of the principles of noninterference in the affairs of other states, respect for their independence and sovereignty...[as] one of the immutable conditions of detente," which was viewed as "a way to create more favorable conditions for peaceful socialist and communist construction." "Detente and peaceful coexistence are concerned with interstate relations," Brezhnev related. "This means primarily that quarrels and conflicts between countries should not be decided by war, use of force or the threat of force. Detente does not in the slightest way abolish, and cannot abolish or change the laws of class struggle." 132/

On Armed Forces Day 1978 Brezhnev referred to the Soviet military "together with the allied armies" only as "a reliable guard for the peaceful labor of the Soviet people and the other peoples of the socialist community." No mention was made of internationalist functions or other commitments to the third world. 133/ Perhaps Brezhnev's strongest words in recent years were contained in his Revolution Day 1977 speech, when he related the following:

The socialist countries are staunch and reliable friends of ...[third world] countries and are prepared to give them utmost assistance and support in their development along the progressive path. This means not only moral and political, but also economic and organizational support, including assistance in strengthening their defenses. 134/

The above phrase, "including assistance in strengthening their defenses," while clearly implying arms transfers and military training, was at most a vague allusion to military support that might be provided by Soviet armed forces units.

Since the 1973 Middle East war, Moscow has not shown a proclivity to use military units to support third world favorites in adventurous or other offensive fashion. Nor is there a consistent pattern of USSR military support of friends in power suffering internal political difficulties. For example, no Soviet airmen or seamen were sent to aid by their presence or military skills the short-lived success by revolutionaries in Portuguese Timor, the seizure of power by insurgents in Mozambique, or the governments of India, Sierra Leone, or Jamaica following declarations of states of emergency in these nations. The Kremlin has used armed forces to support friends in the third world occasionally and only when a vacuum of legitimate rule has been created by the rapid withdrawal of a colonial power, as in Angola and Spanish Sahara in 1975-76, or when the USSR could assume a position of acting to defend the sovereignty or territorial integrity of a third world nation, as in Iraq in 1973-74, in the Lebanese civil war, and in the

1977-78 Ethiopian-Somalian conflict. Moscow has also avoided military confrontation with the United States.

The intervention in Iraq in 1973-74 bore a number of important structural similarities to the USSR's involvement in Sudan in 1970-71. In both instances Moscow helped a friendly regime suppress an insurgency by an ethnic minority seeking to chart its own destiny. Whereas the Anyanya in southern Sudan, who were backed by Ethiopia, Zaire and Uganda, had sought to throw off the yoke of Khartoum, Baghdad in the early 1970s faced a new Kurdish rebellion backed by Iran and, more indirectly, the United States and Israel. In each instance Moscow's aid consisted of unannounced air support. While many in the world sympathized with the plight and objectives of the insurgent minorities, neither old nor new nations were prepared to make much issue of these conflicts, if only as a result of their own self-interest in principles of national sovereignty.

In Lebanon Moscow supported the Palestinians and opposed Syria's intervention into the civil war, but the USSR did not intervene in these events militarily. The occasion for the nearby appearance of Soviet warships in June 1976 was the Sixth Fleet's evacuation of Americans and Europeans from Lebanon. The Soviet naval presence, which included a helicopter carrier, was meant to countervail the image of U.S. military power projected by the aircraft carrier America and helicopter carrier Guadalcanal and their supporting warships. It was also customary for Soviet vessels to keep close watch of major U.S. warships when they entered the eastern Mediterranean. In short, this

was no military confrontation, but a joint appearance prompted by a U.S. naval deployment. Although Moscow could not be sure that the Marines aboard the U.S. amphibious ships and the America's air power would not be used in a way reminiscent of the U.S. intervention in Lebanon in 1958, it probably had great confidence of this, considering the political climate in the United States, the absence of other U.S. military preparations and the Ford administration's rhetoric at the time. Nevertheless, the presence of a Soviet squadron in the absence of complete certainty was a reminder that aggressive U.S. military action in the eastern Mediterranean could not be undertaken without raising the possibility of superpower military confrontation.

These Soviet actions in Iraq and off the coast of Lebanon caused the United States little anguish. In neither instance was Soviet military behavior directed at establishing a new regime in a nation or otherwise altering a status quo. The stories in Angola and the former Spanish Sahara in 1975-76 were different, however. Also disturbing was the size and form of Soviet military activity in Ethiopia in 1977-78. as was the intervention, with critical Soviet support, of thousands of Cuban combat troops in both Angola and Ethiopia.

#### Angola and the Horn of Africa

Soviet aid to Angolan insurgents initially took the form of arms and other material deliveries by sea and air to the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) led by Agostinho Neto. At least as important to the USSR as its predisposition to support anti-colonial movements generally was Peking's support of the National Front for

the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) and National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). Chinese arms began to flow to Angola in 1973, and in 1974 Peking began to send military advisers. The FNLA and UNITA were also favored by the United States. Moscow announced renewed support of the MPLA--Soviet aid was suspended after a leadership split in the MPLA in 1973--one month after the CIA began to fund the FNLA in mid-1974. 135/ Soviet transport aircraft began airlifting armaments to Brazzaville for the MPLA in March 1975. U.S. Air Force C-141 transport aircraft and U.S. Navy vessels began to transport arms into the area in July. 136/ U.S. aid to the MPLA's opponents probably played into the hands of Soviet leaders opposed to linkage between detente and USSR support for national liberation movements. Moscow saw its material support of the MPLA quite legitimate in the summer of 1975. Hence Politburo member Mikhail Suslov was not viewing things boldly when he said: "The principle of peaceful coexistence between states with different social systems, as is well known, has nothing in common with class peace between the exploiters and the exploited, the colonialists and the victims of colonial oppression, or between the oppressors and the oppressed." 137/

Cuban military men able to utilize the sophisticated equipment being delivered from the USSR began to take part in combat operations in late spring of 1975 and in the fall, after South African military units and Zairian troops entered Angola against the MPLA, sizeable Cuban ground forces were fielded. To equip the Cuban forces at this crucial time an emergency airlift by Soviet military transport aircraft (about 70 flights) was carried out beginning in late October via



stopovers in Algeria, Mali and Guinea. Transport for the large-scale Cuban buildup was provided initially by Cuban troopships and aircraft. 138/

MPLA forces in Angola obtained the services of several hundred Soviet military advisers only after Angolan Independence Day (November 11, 1975) and the entry into Angola of South African troops and a number of battles between South African and Cuban units. Aeroflot IL-62s began flying Cuban troops to Angola in January 1976, but only after Havana's shorter-ranged Bristol Britannias were denied further refueling by Barbados and Portugal (in the Azores). The Soviet aircraft were able to fly non-stop to Guinea, where fuel could be obtained. By the time the airlift ended in late January approximately 11,000 Cuban soldiers were in Angola. 139/ Beginning in late November, in conjunction with the increase in arms deliveries by sea and air and then the airlift of Cuban troops, a Soviet amphibious ship, destroyer and oiler--that is, the West African patrol--took up a position off the coasts of the Congo and Angola while a Soviet cruiser and perhaps submarine escort were deployed from the Mediterranean to a position south of Guinea. These ships probably were sent to cut short any thoughts in Zaïre of attacking Soviet aircraft and cargo vessels and to provide incoming transport planes command control and communications support--including waiving if that became necessary. The first vessel to arrive--an Alligator-class amphibious landing ship (LST)--may also have been intended to provide for the evacuation of Soviet military advisers if that became necessary. 140/

Neither politically nor militarily were these Soviet actions terribly adventurous. South Africa's earlier entry into the conflict obtained for the MPLA strong support from previously neutral African circles. At the emergency Organization of African Unity meeting in Addis Ababa in mid-January 1976, 22 OAU members recognized the MPLA as the legitimate government of Angola; other members sought only a compromise 'government of national unity'. 141/ As to Washington, in November 1975 Secretary of State Kissinger warned that "the United States cannot remain indifferent" to Soviet and Cuban military intervention in Angola and that "continuation of an interventionist policy must inevitably threaten other relationships." "We will never permit detente to turn into a subterfuge of unilateral advantage," he said. 142/ However, in December the Senate voted 54-22 to terminate covert U.S. military assistance to the FNLA and UNITA. 143/ President Ford responded to this by saying: "The issue in Angola is not, never has been, and never will be a question of the use of U.S. forces. The sole issue is the provision of modest amounts of assistance to oppose military intervention by two extra-continental powers, namely the Soviet Union and Cuba." 144/ In early January the President explicitly ruled out any withholding of American grain shipments in retaliation for Soviet behavior in Angola. Hence when the USSR initiated the airlift of Cuban troops to Angola and deployed warships toward the scene of the conflict it was able to assess the risk of a military confrontation with the United States as nil and had every reason to expect the Ford administration to content itself with denunciation.

A London Observer and United Press International story reporting the U.S. aircraft carrier Independence to be "operating in waters off Angola, possibly providing tactical support for air strikes in the Angolan war," was known to be false by the USSR; 145/ the Independence was visible in the Mediterranean. The Kremlin could also determine the heading of the aircraft carrier Saratoga, which left Florida on January 7, to be the Mediterranean, not the South Atlantic. Ever cautious, though, to allay any further likelihood of U.S. intervention, a Pravda editorial related: "The Soviet Union does not seek anything in Angola--neither economic, military nor other gain. Any assertions concerning the Soviet Union's intention to establish military bases there and about Soviet military expansion in Africa in general, are unfounded." 146/ But, just in case the Ford administration did decide to stage a naval presence in the South Atlantic, Soviet warships were deployed in a way that they could quickly blunt the political impact of that effort. On station near the Strait of Gibraltar, after being redeployed from the eastern Mediterranean and Northern Fleet, were two Soviet cruisers and a destroyer, while redeployed to the mid-Atlantic was an intelligence collecting vessel. The countervailing value implicit in this readiness dissolved any remaining U.S. thoughts about being able to mount an indisputably dominant naval presence in West African waters. 147/

The Angolan civil war did not signal increased Kremlin aggressiveness or acceptance of risk in the use of military power in third world conflicts. What Moscow did was take decisive advantage of extremely

easy pickings. Moreover, in view of those earlier U.S. operations in Angola and the clear desire by the Ford administration to intervene more heavily in late 1975 and thereafter, the Kremlin, without cynicism, may also have considered its behavior within the bounds of detente from a U.S. perspective. That the Executive in the United States suddenly found itself bound by strong internal forces driven by the outcome of the Vietnam War, Soviet leaders may have reasoned, was not a legitimate cause for USSR restraint; although some in the Kremlin nevertheless may have been concerned about the effects of the Cuban intervention and Soviet airlift upon U.S.-Soviet relations and future U.S. defense efforts. Against the possibility of this negative fallout was the bird in the hand of Angola, the image of the USSR acting strongly against South Africa, concern about Chinese influence in Africa, relations with Cuba, and the opportunity to show the Soviet Union as able to project military power globally. It was an opportunity the Kremlin was not able to pass by.

The Angolan conflict illustrated a strong Soviet-Cuban alliance in these affairs and Havana's willingness to lend combat military support to friends. Insofar as Cuba could not have mounted the operation it did in Angola without Soviet logistics and other material support, the USSR was responsible for this intervention. But it is mistaken to regard Fidel Castro as a Buckingham to a Brezhnev Richard III; nor are the Cubans this century's Hessians. Cuban military men were active in Africa at least as early as 1961 when Havana established a permanent military mission in Ghana. Also

at that time Cuban military support was given to Algeria. In the mid-1960s a Cuban military presence was established in Congo-Brazzaville and Guinea and in the early and mid-1970s military missions were established in a half dozen other African countries, one of which was Angola. A detailed analysis of these involvements and Cuban-Soviet relations indicates an interest by Havana in these affairs quite apart from prompting or promises by the USSR. 148/ The Kremlin role was to make Cuban military intervention in size both possible and effective.

A major stopover point for Soviet arms destined for Angola was Algeria. While Soviet transport aircraft were airlifting Cubans to Angola in January 1976, a sizable volume of Soviet armaments that arrived in Algeria appeared to be off-loaded as aid for the Algerian-backed Polisario guerrillas disputing the division of the former Spanish Sahara by Morocco and Mauritania. Those continued U.S. attacks on Soviet behavior in Africa in February were then seen by some related to this situation. Earlier, in mid-January the Sixth Fleet cruiser Little Rock was sent to Casablanca and in a number of statements thereafter Secretary Kissinger spoke about Soviet-Cuban intervention in the third world generally. Upon his departure for Moscow in late January for strategic arms limitation talks, Kissinger said: "I am going to make clear to my hosts that the United States will not accept intervention in other parts of the world." 149/ Aside from speculation about Algerian leverage over the USSR, Moscow's general sympathy for movements like the Polisario, the

cover provided by the airlift to Angola, and enthusiasm of the moment, it is difficult to know what else might have prompted this Soviet action which the Kremlin neither advertised nor expanded upon.

In mid-1977 President Sadat alleged that helicopters of the Soviet carrier Moskva practiced electronic counter-measures against Egyptian forces during the conflict between Egypt and Libya that erupted in mid-year. The Moskva, though, was in the Black Sea at the time, and the only other candidate for this type of action then in the Mediterranean lay in a single naval helicopter. At least as plausible an explanation is an Egyptian technical mistake, an unreported Libyan capability, or President Sadat's interest to further reinforce support for his final expulsion of the Soviet military presence from Egypt in 1976 and Cairo's relationship with Moscow thereafter. 150/ Hence almost two years went by between the Soviet airlifts of Cuban troops to Angola and of arms to Angola and Algeria in early 1976 and the next Soviet military action in the third world.

In 1977-78 Cuban and then Soviet military advisers were sent to Ethiopia to help government armed forces against Somali forces in the Ogaden area in the southeast and Eritrean secessionists in the north. Soviet military assistance, after first being sent by sea, was then also transported in a large airlift in November-December 1977. The Soviet airlift capability, as demonstrated in the 1973 Middle East war and the Angolan civil war as well as in the Ethiopian-Somalian conflict, was the product of continued development and procurement of heavy lift long-range transport aviation. Between 1965 and 1977 the aggregate lift

capacity of Soviet military transport aircraft grew by 132 percent. 151/

Together with the airlift the number of Soviet advisers in Ethiopia rose from about 100 to about 1000. Moreover, in early 1978 a massive buildup of Cuban forces took place, such that in early spring 1978 16,000-17,000 Cuban soldiers were reported in Ethiopia, as compared to 50 a year before and 2,000 in January 1978. 152/ Also on the scene were a number of South Yemeni military men. Thereafter, while allied airmen flew tactical aircraft into combat on behalf of Addis Ababa, Soviet personnel were allowed to pilot helicopters in the Ogaden and then in Eritrea. The almost two years of elapsed time between the Soviet military interventions in Angola and Ethiopia, Moscow's ability to argue in the latter instance that it was supporting the principle of national sovereignty, and the risk the Kremlin ran of losing a long built-up position in Somalia together indicated general reticence and great calculation among Soviet leaders about using armed forces coercively in the third world. It is reasonable to assume the existence of much discussion and argument about these operations, positing on the one side an interest in outdistancing the United States and China and obtaining positions of influence for the USSR and, on the other, a concern not to trigger a new era of U.S. activism or to undermine important negotiations with the United States and European nations.

The Soviet airlift to Ethiopia began only after President Siad Barre finally expelled the incongruous Soviet and Cuban military presence from Somalia. Aside from its position in Somalia, Moscow risked little. While Soviet involvement was escalated slowly,

Somalia received no practical Western support. The Kremlin may even have calculated that the fighting could be ended before Mogadiscio would reach its limit of tolerance and that, in the end, it would not only obtain a strong position in Ethiopia, but be able to retain or regain its military facilities and presence in Somalia. Presumably, though, Ethiopia was viewed to be more important strategically than Somalia. Almost certainly the military government of Mengistu Haile Mariam was regarded as being open to a considerable degree of influence. Concern to head off a particular Chinese presence may have been of further significance.

Moscow had no reason to expect a military confrontation with the United States. Opposition within the Congress and among the American public to new foreign entanglements remained strong; further, when exiled Lunda tribesmen sortied into Shaba province in Zaire in early 1977 the Carter administration showed itself willing to send the Mobutu government only "nonlethal" equipment. After the USSR and Cuba became involved in Ethiopia, the United States did nothing to support Somalia, except to hint at one point about the possibility of a small security assistance program. In February 1978, when the Ethiopians with Cuban and Soviet support took the offensive, the USSR reportedly had 27 ships in the area. No U.S. aircraft carrier was in the Indian Ocean at the time and only three U.S. Navy destroyers were near the scene. Washington never suggested that the United States might become militarily engaged in these events. As in Angola, Moscow could perceive a relatively clear field.



Of further importance, even strong proponents of detente in the USSR considered it unreasonable for the United States to view this Soviet behavior as violating detente. Said Georgi Arbatov, head of the Institute for the United States and Canada and a reported confidant of Brezhnev: "In undertaking the large and laborious work of improving Soviet-American relations the two sides could not but understand from the very beginning that they are separated both by radical ideological and social differences and by their approaches to many international questions." 153/

These words did not mean that it was the USSR's intention to frequently use its armed forces to promote Soviet foreign policy objectives. What the Kremlin's rhetoric and behavior after the 1973 Middle East war indicated was preparedness to take ad hoc advantage of extremely favorable circumstances; in particular, the opportunity to intervene on behalf of a principle of international law, as supported by a large number of third world nations, with little likelihood of military confrontation with the United States, and with an otherwise large prospect of rapid success. Surrogates for the legitimacy provided by international law might be covert U.S. involvement, Western military activity or intervention by nations outcast in the international community which the West would not want to be perceived supporting (for example, South Africa).

Footnotes

1. Roger E. Kanet, "The Soviet Union and the Colonial Question, 1917-1953," in Roger E. Kanet, ed., The Soviet Union and the Developing Nations (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), pp. 1-26; Wladyslaw W. Kulski, Peaceful Co-Existence: An Analysis of Soviet Foreign Policy (Henry Regnery, 1959), pp. 188-228.
2. O. Edmund Clubb, Twentieth Century China, (Columbia University Press, 1964), pp. 88, 114-22; Allen S. Whiting, Soviet Policies in China, 1917-1924 (Columbia University Press, 1953), pp. 201-04.
3. As quoted by James C. Bowden, "Soviet Military Aid to Nationalist China, 1923-1941," in Raymond L. Garthoff, ed., Sino-Soviet Military Relations (Frederick A. Praeger, 1966), p. 46.
4. Ibid., pp. 45-53; John Gittings, The Role of the Chinese Army (Oxford, 1967), p. 100; Joseph E. Thach, "Soviet Military Assistance to Nationalist China, Part I," Military Review, vol. 57 (August 1977), pp. 72-82; Clubb, Twentieth Century China, p. 124.
5. Clubb, Twentieth Century China, pp. 135-40. For extended analyses of Soviet policy toward China in the early and mid-1920s, see Whiting, Soviet Policies in China, 1917-1924; and Conrad Brandt, Stalin's Failure in China (Harvard University Press, 1958).
6. Adam B. Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence, Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917-1973 (Rev. ed.; Praeger, 1974), pp. 243-45; Hugh Thomas, The Spanish Civil War (Harper Colophon, 1963), pp. 260-61; see also G.M. Gathorne-Hardy, A Short History of International Affairs, 1920-1939

(4th ed., Oxford, 1950), pp. 434-37.

7. Thomas, The Spanish Civil War, pp. 304-05, 320-22, 337, 346, 525, 634-43; Dante A. Puzzo, Spain and the Great Powers, 1936-1941 (Columbia University Press, 1962), pp. 136-40.

8. Kanet, "The Soviet Union and the Colonial Question, 1917-1953," pp. 16-24; David J. Dallin, Soviet Foreign Policy After Stalin (J.B. Lippincott, 1961), pp. 290-95.

9. For example, see L.M. Kaganovich's Revolution Day 1955 speech, Pravda, November 7, 1955 in Current Digest of the Soviet Press (hereafter CDSP), vol. 7 (December 7, 1955), p. 8; and Khrushchev's 20th Party Congress speech, in Leo Grulow, ed., Current Soviet Policies--II: The Documentary Record of the 20th Communist Party Congress and Its Aftermath (Frederick A. Praeger, 1956), pp. 32-34; also, Dallin, Soviet Foreign Policy After Stalin, pp. 294-321.

10. Credits to Yugoslavia, amounting to \$444 million, are not included in this figure. Joseph S. Berliner, Soviet Economic Aid: The New Aid and Trade Policy in Underdeveloped Nations (Frederick A. Praeger, 1958), pp. 56-58, 84-87. Through 1977 Soviet and Eastern European credits and grants to less developed nations totalled \$20.4 billion. Communist Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World, 1977, report no. ER 78-10478u (Central Intelligence Agency, November 1978), p. 5

11. On the events leading to the Egyptian arms deal, see Uri Ra'anani, The USSR Arms the Third World: Case Studies in Soviet Foreign Policy (MIT Press, 1969), pp. 11-172. On Nasser's attempts to obtain arms from

the United States during this period, see Mohammed Heikal, The Cairo Documents (Doubleday, 1973), pp. 31-55.

12. Communist Aid to Less Developed Countries of the Free World, 1977, pp. 1-4.

13. Heikal, The Cairo Documents, pp. 111-12. The same perspective is presented by Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in, In Search of Identity: An Autobiography (Harper and Row, 1978), pp. 145-46.

14. O.M. Smolansky, "Moscow and the Suez Crisis, 1956: A Reappraisal," Political Science Quarterly, vol. 30 (December 1965), p. 588.

15. Various false reports about Soviet military activity may have been more important. For the texts of the Soviet letters that were sent to Anthony Eden, Guy Mollet, and David Ben-Gurion, see CDSP, vol. 8 (December 19, 1956), pp. 23-25. Also see Anthony Eden, Full Circle, (Houghton Mifflin, 1960), pp. 620-21; Harold Macmillan, Riding the Storm, 1956-1959 (Macmillan, 1971), pp. 165-67; Moshe Dayan, Diary of the Sinai Campaign (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966), pp. 184-86; Kennett Love, Suez: The Twice Fought War (McGraw-Hill, 1969), pp. 612-14; Michael Brecher, Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy (Oxford, 1974), pp. 284-90; Jon D. Glasman, Arms for the Arabs: The Soviet Union and War in the Middle East (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), pp. 15-20. In my judgment, the unusual Soviet military activity in the western military districts of the USSR prior to and during the Suez crisis was related to developments in Eastern Europe, not the Middle East. For a different

view, see Ferenc A. Vali, Rift and Revolt in Hungary (Harvard University Press, 1961), p. 358n.

16. Smolansky, "Moscow and the Suez Crisis," p. 599.

17. Smolansky, "Moscow and the Suez Crisis," pp. 596-97; Heikal, The Cairo Documents, pp. 147-48; Sadat, In Search of Identity, p. 146; Love, Suez, pp. 611-12.

18. Homer, The Iliad, trans., by Robert Fitzgerald (Anchor, 1975), p. 403.

19. Patrick Seale, The Struggle for Syria: A Study of Post-War Arab Politics, 1945-1958 (Oxford, 1965), pp. 293-306; J.M. Mackintosh, Strategy and Tactics of Soviet Foreign Policy (Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 225-29; Robert Stephens, Nasser: A Political Biography (Penguin, 1971), pp. 266-67.

20. Walter Z. Laqueur, The Soviet Union and the Middle East, (Praeger, 1959), p. 254.

21. Quotations are from the text, as reprinted in the New York Times, September 14, 1957.

22. Laqueur, The Soviet Union and the Middle East, p. 258.

23. See Seale, The Struggle for Syria, p. 303.

24. Ibid., pp. 303-06; also see George S. Dragnich, "The Soviet Union's Quest for Access to Naval Facilities in Egypt Prior to the June War of 1967," professional paper no. 127 (Center for Naval Analyses, July 1974), pp. 10-12; Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 1957-1958, p. 15812.
25. Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 1957-1958, p. 15812.
26. Seale, The Struggle for Syria, p. 301.
27. Heikal, The Cairo Documents, p. 134; Margaret M. Bodron, "U.S. Intervention in Lebanon," Military Review, vol. 56 (February 1976), p. 74; Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 1957-1958, p. 16308.
28. Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 1957-1958, p. 16341-42.
29. New York Times, June 20, 1958; Arnold L. Horelick and Myron Rush, Strategic Power and Soviet Foreign Policy, (University of Chicago Press, 1966), pp. 42-49.
30. Dragnich, "The Soviet Quest...", pp. 14-15.
31. Anwar Sadat's comment that Nasser was "saddened" by the Soviet response to U.S. intervention in Lebanon can be taken as nothing less than extreme understatement. Sadat, In Search of Identity, p. 153. Also see Dragnich, "The Soviet Quest...", p. 16.
32. Colin Legum, Congo Disaster (Penguin, 1961), p. 141.

33. Ernest W. Lefever, Crisis in the Congo: A United Nations Force in Action (Brookings, 1965), p. 46; New York Times, January 1, 1961; Brian Urquhart, Hammaraskjold (Alfred Knopf, 1972), p. 444; "Evolution de La Crise Congolaise, September 1960-April 1961," Chronique de Politique Etrangère, vol. 14 (September-November 1961), p. 658.

34. New York Times, December 12, 1960 and November 7, 1962. "Threat to Peace in Southeast Asia," Pravda, December 14, 1960 in CDSF, vol. 12 (January 11, 1961), p. 17.

35. As quoted by David Hall, "The Laotian War of 1962 and Indo-Pakistani War of 1971," in Barry M. Blechman and Stephen S. Kaplan, Force Without War: U.S. Armed Forces as a Political Instrument (Brookings, 1978), p. 152.

36. On Soviet-Indonesian relations, see Justus M. von der Kroef, "The Soviet Union and Southeast Asia," in Kanet, The Soviet Union and the Developing Nations, pp. 99-101; and Justus M. van der Kroef "Soviet and Chinese Influence in Indonesia," in Alvin Z. Rubinstein ed., Soviet and Chinese Influence in the Third World (Praeger, 1975), pp. 54-58.

37. As quoted in Guy J. Pauker, "The Soviet Challenge in Indonesia," Foreign Affairs, vol. 40 (July 1962), p. 613.

38. Nikita S. Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers: The Last Testament, edited and translated by Strobe Talbott (Little, Brown, 1974), p. 327; also see I.A. Agung, Twenty Years: Indonesian Foreign Policy, 1945-1963 (Mouton, 1973), pp. 294-98, 395.

39. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House (Houghton Mifflin, 1965), pp. 532-36.
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116. Golan, Yom Kippur and After, pp. 75-78.
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134. Moscow Domestic Service, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (November 2, 1977), p. P11.
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148. Durch, "The Cuban Military in Africa and the Middle East," pp. 1-38.
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CASE STUDIES

## Chapter 6

### INTERVENTION IN EASTERN EUROPE

by Michel Tatu

The crisis in Poland in October 1956, the Soviet suppression of the Hungarian revolution in November 1956, and Warsaw Pact intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968 were quite different, but they had at least two points in common.

First, the local starting point was political and social turmoil that brought about sweeping changes in and a pronounced weakening of the leadership in the face of growing unrest of the population. The combination of these two elements--a succession crisis at the top and what the Russians call stikhiinost (spontaneous demonstrations) by the population--is traditionally perceived in Moscow--in fact, in every Communist system--as the main danger to the system, the only one that could produce a total collapse.

Second, internationally, the Soviet Union was a factor in each case, though to a different degree. Its role was maximal in Hungary and minimal in Poland in 1956, but in each case it was a real or potential threat, which the different local factions tried to use for their own purposes.

Before comparing the Soviet role in these cases, I shall briefly set down the history leading up to and the main events of these crises.

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### Historical Background

The events in Poland and in Hungary in 1956 had a common starting point: the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in January and February 1956, which officially launched the destalinization campaign. The effect of this on other Communist parties could only be a further destabilization of leaderships already weakened by the first departures from the dictator's policies. In Hungary, for example, the ups and downs of Imre Nagy's political fortune between 1953 and 1956 closely followed the struggle for power in Moscow, with the Russians arbitrating the fight between Stalinist hard-liner Matyas Rakosi and Nagy, the future head of the counterrevolutionary government, who was at that time only a "consumerist" reformer. The July 18 decision to fire Rakosi was conveyed by Soviet Politburo member Anastas Mikoyan, who came from Moscow with a direct order from Khrushchev. The same thing happened in Poland, where the replacement of the deceased Boleslaw Bierut, first secretary of the Polish party under Stalin, was presided over by Khrushchev personally in March 1956.

Another starting point for Poland was the Poznan riot at the end of June 1956. In a Communist system, such a localized, brief riot does not lead to a crisis and may even have little political significance under a united leadership since it presents no challenge to the authority of those in charge. The picture is quite different if the leadership is divided, when each contending faction will find in the riot, in the way it was handled by the authorities and explained to the public, an argument to be used in its struggle. That is what happened in Poland in 1956, though

two observations must be made:

First, the uprising, though violent, did not spread to other cities. In the months that followed it, the authorities, even though they were changing, remained in control.

Second, the Poznan riot was suppressed by exclusively Polish forces-- police and army. This helped keep the Soviet Union out at that stage and allowed the Polish leaders to resist Moscow's pressure later. At the same time, it limited popular anti-Soviet feelings, making the riot and its aftermath more manageable. This was not true of the Hungarian situation.

Politically, the Poznan riot further isolated the Stalinist hard core of the party leadership (discredited by awkward attempts to portray the riot as counterrevolutionary) and helped the irresistible rise of Wladyslaw Gomulka. Formerly head of the party (he had been elected in 1943, without formal Soviet approval due to wartime conditions), Gomulka was purged in 1949 as "deviationist," jailed, set free in 1954, but kept out of any political activity until the fall of 1956. But after the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU and the riot, he appeared to be the only man capable of leading a destalinized, more liberal, more nationalistic party. An important factor, indeed unique among the three cases under study, was that many previous leaders genuinely accepted the necessity for this new course.

Nevertheless, Gomulka's opponents remained a powerful group. They attempted a coup, which included plans to arrest hundreds of liberal Communists, among them Gomulka, and was intended to prevent the meeting of the party's Central Committee, scheduled for October 19, that was to



bring Gomulka back as party leader. At the same time, Soviet troops began to move from East Germany toward Warsaw. On top of that, Khrushchev and a high-level Soviet delegation arrived in Warsaw the same day.

The showdown ended on the morning of October 20, after a full night of tough talks, with an apparent capitulation by Khrushchev, who made major concessions to the Poles: not only was Gomulka duly elected to head the party, but the demand of the new leadership for the removal of Soviet-born Marshal Konstantin Rokossovsky from the post of defense minister was accepted by Moscow some weeks later.

The situation was very different in Hungary, where the crisis culminated in a total collapse of the party leadership, an outbreak of prolonged and uncontrolled violence, and finally a brutal crushing by Soviet forces of what had become a national revolution typical of the nineteenth century. The main culprits in this tragedy, apart from the Russians, were undoubtedly the pre-October leaders in Budapest--Erno Gero for the party and Andras Hegedus for the government (the latter was later found to be a revisionist, though many years after these events). Both men, unlike Edward Ochab and others in Poland, climbed to power not only without regard for popular aspirations for change, but also oblivious of the winds from Moscow, which favored a "reasonable" destalinization. Imre Nagy, the symbol of reformer's communism and the Hungarian equivalent of Gomulka, was readmitted to the party on October 10, 1956, only ten days before his nomination as head of the government.

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Nagy's return to power occurred after a huge Hungarian demonstration of solidarity with the Poles, on October 23, had turned into a riot, with Gero still in power (he was not ousted until October 25, after Mikoyan and Mikhail Suslov made a trip from Moscow to Budapest) and preventing the new prime minister from acting effectively during two crucial days. In addition, the previous leadership had asked the Soviet forces in Hungary to suppress the riot. This immediately turned the riot into a general uprising, with a definite and violent anti-Soviet orientation. On November 1 Nagy proclaimed the neutrality of Hungary and its withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact, and officially requested the departure of all Soviet troops from the country. I will discuss later whether this move was responsible for the subsequent Russian intervention or was merely an attempt to escape Soviet action already decided upon. In any case, the crushing of the Hungarian revolution, which started the morning of November 4, was announced by the sudden defection, on the evening of November 1, of Janos Kadar, first secretary of the party, who could be found three days later at the head of a "revolutionary worker-peasant government" imposed by Russian troops.

The repression was brutal (the total number of executions is estimated at 2,000, including that of Nagy himself and of his minister of defense, Pal Maleter, in the summer of 1958), but the process of normalization developed in the long run along much more liberal lines than in Poland.

In Czechoslovakia in the spring of 1968, the Soviet Union faced a situation midway between the Polish and Hungarian crises of 1956. It

differed from Poland in that military intervention was decided upon, and from Hungary in that Soviet troops did not fight. It exemplifies a combination of military preparation and heavy, long-standing political pressure. It started in January 1968 with the eviction of Antonin Novotny, an old time Stalinist leader, from his post of first secretary of the Communist party and his replacement by Alexander Dubcek, head of the party in Slovakia. Behind the change were dissatisfaction with the conservative Novotny's rule, Slovak nationalist aspirations, and a growing push by intellectuals for more political freedom. (Unlike in Hungary and Poland, the role of the workers was limited until the very last days of the crisis and at no point was there an outburst of popular violence.) The main features of the Prague spring were an audacious program of political reforms (notably the "action program" in April), the lifting of the censorship of the press (de facto in March, de jure in June), and a vigorous campaign to correct bureaucratic and police excesses of the past, which further isolated the dogmatic pro-Novotny elements. It was expected that the latter would be purged by a party congress due to convene on September 2. This was prevented by the Russian intervention in August.

The Soviet leaders did not consider it necessary to save Novotny from his opponents: Brezhnev was invited by Novotny in December 1967 to Prague to be an arbiter but refused to get involved in the quarrel, saying to the Czechoslovaks: "It is your business." But, early in 1968, they began to express to Dubcek their fear that the liberalizing process was going too far. A meeting in Dresden on March 23, 1968 was the first official expression of this dissatisfaction and at the same time the first grouping against Dubcek of the five Warsaw Pact countries (the USSR, Poland, East Germany, Hungary, and Bulgaria), which were to take part in the military intervention five months later.

After many months of military and political pressure a long meeting of Soviet and Czechoslovak leaders in Cierna-nad-Tisou at the end of July led to a temporary conciliation. But Dubcek was unwilling or unable to take tough measures against the liberals in Prague. A few days after the return of the Soviet leaders to Moscow, the decision to act was made. During the night of August 20-21, Czechoslovakia was occupied by a large contingent of Soviet forces, supplemented by sizable groups of Polish, East German, Hungarian, and Bulgarian troops.

There was no violent resistance, but the political crisis dragged on for more than eight months. The Soviet planners were unable to impose a Hungarian style "worker-peasant government." Major roles were played in the first days by the nonviolent but effective resistance of the population, encouraged and coordinated by a wide network of radio stations, and by President Ludvik Svoboda, who refused to cooperate with Moscow as long as Dubcek and other legitimate leaders were unable to resume their functions. Once this was achieved, however, Svoboda pushed for the compromises that would lead to capitulation. The Moscow "protocol," signed on August 26, was followed by a treaty legalizing the stationing of Soviet troops in Czechoslovakia (October 16), by the breaking up of the hard core of the liberal leadership with the removal of Sarkovsky from the parliament's chairmanship (January 7, 1969), and finally by the replacement of Dubcek with Gustav Husak as head of the party after a direct threat from Marshal A. A. Grechko, Soviet defense minister, of a new military intervention (April 17, 1969). Although it was a year before the August invasion was officially approved by the new Prague leadership (September 1969), the slow but growing repression of liberal tendencies led to a regime that is now one of the

most tightly controlled in Eastern Europe, much more so than those in Hungary and Poland.

### Soviet Behavior in the Three Crises

#### Poland, 1956

The behavior of the Soviet leaders toward Gomulka in 1956 was similar to their attitude toward Dubček in Czechoslovakia in 1968, with the difference that it was demonstrated before the new party leader came to power, not after, as in Prague. Basically, the Russians were disappointed that their candidate for the Polish leadership after Boleslaw Bierut's death, Zenon Nowak, was not elected in March 1956. They were not openly hostile to the selection of Edward Ochab, a middle-of-the-road man, but they continued to encourage their most dedicated supporters, the members of the "Natolin group" (named after a Warsaw suburb where they had formerly met), and watched with great anxiety the rise of what they perceived to be a nationalist-revisionist trend centered around Gomulka. In that respect, the public demand that Rokossovsky, the Soviet marshal put in command of the Polish army by Stalin, be sent back to Moscow was seen as the beginning of a dangerous "desatellization." During the fall of 1956, the growing independence of the Polish press and its anti-Soviet overtones were another cause for concern: Moscow had good reason to consider that this would be worse if Gomulka, the hero of the liberal Communists, came to power.

- At that time, there was certainly no unity in the Soviet Politburo. Nikita Khrushchev, first secretary for only three years, had antagonized the Soviet Stalinist faction consisting of Vyacheslav Molotov, Lazar Kaganovich, Kliment Voroshilov, and others by his revelations at the Twentieth Party

Congress. In this fight, which was to culminate in June 1957 with the defeat of the Molotov faction, Khrushchev had an interest in supporting some degree of reform in Eastern European countries and in putting some distance between the old Stalinist guard and himself. But he needed a guarantee from Gomulka that basic Soviet interests would be preserved in Poland.

The Soviet objectives in the crisis were communicated in a most direct manner. At first, Khrushchev wanted the whole Polish Politburo to come to Moscow for a discussion on October 17, two days before the Central Committee meeting scheduled in Warsaw to decide the change of leadership. The "invitation" was turned down by Ochab, so Khrushchev decided to go to Warsaw without being asked on the very day of the plenum, with Molotov, Kaganovich, Marshal Konev, commander-in-chief of the Warsaw Pact countries, and eleven generals. All accounts of these talks agree on some basic facts: Khrushchev refused to shake hands with Gomulka, asking, "Who is this man?" According to Gomulka in what may be considered his autobiography, "every time I spoke up he turned his head away and started to talk with Mikoyan. He listened only to what Ochab was saying. . . . When he was told that the comrades actually intended to promote me to the function of first secretary, he turned so red that we thought he would blow up any minute. But he restrained himself and did not say a word." 1/ Gomulka adds that Khrushchev "wanted to shout us down," that "several times he pounded the table with his fists," and that "he was particularly angry about what the Polish press wrote at that time on the Soviet Union: 'You are giving free hand to counterrevolutionary agitation,' he shouted, 'that is open treason!'"

The other accounts stress the same points. According to Frank Gibney, the Soviet leaders wanted "an immediate stabilization of the Politburo, substantially as it then was. Gomulka could join, they conceded, as long as the basic balance of the membership remained the same, i.e., pro-Soviet." 2/ Nicholas Bethell, a biographer of Gomulka, quotes from a speech given by Gomulka on October 29, 1956, to Polish press editors, the text of which was published later in Paris. According to Gomulka, the Russians had pointed out that "the preparations and changes connected with the 8th Plenum (the Central Committee meeting of October 19) would lead to a breach of the Warsaw Pact, would lead to a break-off of Soviet-Polish relations." 3/ A milder version was given in a Warsaw publication, which quoted from a speech delivered by Polish politburo member Aleksander Zawadzki: the "Soviet comrades, it is said, were interested in the construction of our new leadership. They pointed to the fact that the proposed leadership is now generally known, but that we gave the Soviet comrades no information about it, in spite of the relationship between us." 4/

These themes were supported by public attacks. On October 20, Pravda published a long article under the headline: "Anti-socialist articles in the Polish press," with numerous quotations purporting to show that the Warsaw newspapers had fallen under the control of reactionary forces. This kind of public warning is particularly important in Communist diplomacy, since it commits the Soviet leadership to achieve results.

Another kind of pressure, more covert but ominous, came from the Soviet military. Normally the contingent of Soviet troops stationed in

Poland, known as the Northern Group of Troops, was made up of three divisions, under the command of General Galicki, with headquarters at Legnica, in the western part of the country, between Wroclaw and the East German border. Beginning in early October, these 30,000 troops were reinforced by four more divisions (three coming from East Germany, one from the Soviet Union), which joined the Legnica group. At the same time, General Galicki ordered his troops to move east, toward Warsaw, and established operational headquarters near Lodz, within striking distance (by a good highway) of the capital. 5/ According to Gibney, "This brought the total available inside Poland to seven divisions, with many times that number ready to move in (from the U.S.S.R. and G.D.R.). Warships had been sighted in the Gulf of Gdansk." 6/

The preparations of the Polish army, under the command of Marshal Rokossovsky and Natolinist high commanders such as Kazimierz Witaszewski, are less clear. According to Philippe Ben, the army had been put on a state of alert two weeks before the October 19 plenum, clearly to support a tentative coup prepared by the Natolinists to prevent Gomulka's rise to power. 7/ Polish forces do not seem to have made large moves like those of the Soviet army.

In any case, the combination of the Soviet show of strength and the intrigues of the Natolin group with the tacit support of the Polish army culminated in a very high degree of pressure on October 19 with the arrival of the Soviet leaders in Warsaw. Why did Khrushchev, after a night of tense discussions with the Polish leaders, decide to back down from his threats and depart early in the morning on October 20, leaving the Polish



Central Committee free to elect Gomulka as its head (which took place the same day)?

In fact, the meeting was not conclusive and, though a catastrophe was avoided, the danger was not over. As Gomulka notes, Khrushchev had not made up his mind. On October 19, "the plans for intervention were ready and preparatory work began. The only thing which had to be done was to issue the order. There was no agreement precisely on that point (among the Soviet leadership) and Khrushchev flew in to make a decision on the spot, depending on the actual situation." A day later, the situation was not very different: "They did not give up at all the idea of intervening. They merely came to the conclusion that at that moment an intervention was not desirable or necessary. They simply decided to wait and see what would happen. That was all that we achieved." 8/

Things began to improve a few days later, but another important trial was still to come. On October 22 or 23 (accounts differ on this point), Gomulka had a telephone call from Khrushchev in Moscow. The tone was friendlier than at their last meeting. The Soviet leader invited his Polish counterpart to Moscow and made a friendly gesture by announcing that he had ordered General Galicki to move back to his headquarters in Legnica on October 25. 9/ In the same manner, the Soviet naval units that were showing the flag not far from Polish Baltic ports were withdrawn. These returns to normal must actually have taken more time than expected, since large movements of Soviet troops across Poland to East Germany were reported at the beginning of November. 10/

Gomulka had agreed to go to Moscow on October 26 but decided to postpone the trip until November 14, fearing that the situation in Poland was not sufficiently under control to prevent anti-Soviet demonstrations. Khrushchev had made in advance the important gesture of yielding to the Polish demand for Rokossovsky's removal. Together with a group of Soviet military advisers, the Soviet marshal left Warsaw on November 14. It had become difficult to keep him in Poland anyway, since in the October 20 election of the new politburo he had received only 23 votes out of 75. A victim of Stalin's purges just before World War II, Rokossovsky had said that he was "fed up with the Polish mess" and was glad to accept the post of Soviet deputy defense minister. Nevertheless, this important concession made only a few days after the crushing of the Hungarian uprising and at a moment when the situation in Poland was far from stabilized must have been the subject of controversy in Moscow.

When Gomulka and two other Polish leaders (Jozef Cyrankiewicz and Aleksander Zawadzki) arrived in Moscow on November 14, the attitude of Khrushchev, who had ordered the repression in Hungary, was considerably tougher. According to Gomulka, the Soviet leader started, as on October 19 in Warsaw, by sharply attacking liberal and anti-Soviet demonstrations in Poland (these were particularly important after the Russian action in Hungary): "He said that if those riots do not stop, he would order his tanks to move. . . . It was not a bad start of negotiations, was it not?" 11/

Khrushchev's previous actions in Poland show that these tough words were probably a bluff and that he preferred to avoid the use of force while

keeping this option open. The point is that Gomulka said exactly what the Soviet leader wanted to hear. Dubcek in 1968 had tried to explain to Brezhnev that things in Czechoslovakia were not that bad, but Gomulka chose the opposite line. "I stated that I knew that things were bad in Poland, that maybe they were worse than comrade Khrushchev would admit. Counterrevolutionary elements had an upper hand, the authority of the Party was very hard hit. . . . In other words, we were at the threshold of anarchy. But since it is a fire, it could not be extinguished by using tanks. We needed time, said I, so that gradually, step by step, we could introduce socialist order in Poland." <sup>12/</sup> Khrushchev, having accepted this reasoning, became "completely satisfied, solicitous and friendly" and agreed to discuss all the problems of Soviet-Polish relations, including compensation for the low coal prices paid by the Soviet Union to Poland over the years. There were no more real problems between the two men except in 1964, when the Soviet leader tried, opposed by Gomulka, to normalize relations with West Germany.

Khrushchev's surprising turnabout in a few weeks from open hostility to nearly complete confidence in a foreign leader has to be explained by the Polish situation at that time, which imposed limits on Soviet actions, and by Gomulka's success in convincing Moscow of his goodwill and capacity to maintain "socialist order"--that is to say, an authoritarian and pro-Soviet system--a not unpleasant task since he was genuinely hostile to liberal ideas. To be sure, he did not intend to be a puppet of Moscow, and his program on certain issues--notably on rural collectivization--was very different from the Soviet model. But this could be considered a secondary

problem and, given the conditions in Poland at that time, he undoubtedly seemed the only man capable of maintaining a tolerable state of affairs. One wonders, nevertheless, if another leader in Moscow--Molotov, for example--would have been less tolerant. After all, Gomulka was, after Tito, the first Communist leader in Eastern Europe who was not totally subservient to Soviet interests.

#### Hungary, 1956

Though the same Soviet leadership faced this crisis only a few days later, its behavior was more complex. The conflict was violent and could not be settled by negotiation, as in Poland, and it covered a longer period, which may be divided into two phases: from October 23 to October 31, Moscow tried to adapt itself to the new situation, without a firm commitment to a definite course of action; on November 1, the decision to use force was made and Soviet behavior changed perceptibly.

The first phase presented the Russians with a problem almost the reverse of what they had found in Poland three days earlier: in Warsaw they opposed a change of leadership fostered by the political elite with the backing of the population; in Budapest they had to rescue a leadership that they did not strongly support from a population yearning for reforms they had at least partially supported. Unlike in Poland, they had no initiative in the crisis and tried, in the first phase, to make the best of it without a clear-cut strategy.

One may question why the Kremlin answered so readily the request of the Gero-Hegedus government, the night of October 23-24, that troops be sent to suppress the riots. Without proper preparation, this first intervention

had little result other than to stir the anti-Soviet feelings of the population without solving the political problems, thus helping bring about a true revolution and the collapse of the system. Probably in this case the Soviet Politburo took the same position it had in 1953, when popular uprising exploded in Berlin: it decided it had no other option than to respond to the request of the local leaders.

According to the report of the United Nations Special Committee for Hungary, two divisions of Soviet troops were already in Hungary before these events, the 2d and 17th mechanized, forming the so-called Southern Group of Troops. These forces, which consisted of roughly 20,000 men and 600 tanks, were stationed mainly around Szolnok, their headquarters, and none were closer to Budapest than forty-five miles. To be sure, the Soviet high command, aware of the rising tension in Hungary, had taken some precautionary measures. According to Noel Barber, by October 21 and 22, "all Soviet officers in Russia who spoke Hungarian or German were recalled from leave." 13/ In any case, the reinforcements came quickly: at 1 a.m. on October 24, a few hours after the outbreak of violence in Budapest, Russian troops began to enter Hungary from Rumania. This probably happened even before the Hungarian government's request for help reached Moscow.

But taking these precautions did not indicate a desire to act. The action in Budapest on the first day, October 24, involved probably no more than a few thousand troops and less than a hundred tanks, a force clearly secondary to that of the Hungarian political police (AVH), which had 30,000 men in the whole country and was the main instrument at the disposal of the government. The Soviet troops moved to protect the party

headquarters, the Parliament House (which was also the seat of the government), the bridges, and the Soviet embassy. Though they incurred casualties--a dozen tanks were destroyed by insurgents armed with Molotov cocktails--they tried to avoid fighting. There were many cases of friendly talks between the people and Soviet soldiers. According to Miklos Molnar, a Soviet officer, General Sharutin, went so far as to proclaim the "neutrality" of his troops in Kecskemet. Molnar concludes from these observations: "We must believe that their inactions were the result of orders from above. . . . Such an attitude expressed some reluctance in Moscow's attitude with regard to Gero's stalinist team." 14/

This behavior was maintained until October 29, when, in exchange for a cease-fire negotiated by Imre Nagy, the Soviet Union agreed to remove its troops from the Hungarian cities. The scale of the commitment was slightly increased, since on October 26, according to Western estimates, there were 50,000 to 75,000 troops in Hungary and some 150 tanks in Budapest. 15/ But the degree of participation remained the same, with the Russians patrolling the main streets of the cities, leaving the side streets to the rebels and fighting only if attacked.

Behavior at the political level followed the same pattern. On October 24 Anastas Mikoyan and Mikhail Suslov arrived in Budapest; a low-level team compared to the Soviet delegation to Warsaw four days earlier. These two men had presided over the replacement of Rakosi by Gero in July; presumably they were not only specialists on Hungary, but also a reflection of the grouping in the Soviet Politburo at that time. Since Mikoyan was clearly aligned with Khrushchev, it is possible that Suslov, at that time a junior member of the ruling group (he had been promoted to politburo membership a

year earlier), represented the tougher line of the Molotov group.

But the circumstances were not ripe for repressive action across the board. Instead, the Soviet representatives tried to bring about an accommodation by pushing the reforms that the Rakosi-Gero team had prevented for so many months. Not only did they not object to Nagy's promotion to prime minister (unlike Gomulka, Nagy had been placed in that position by Khrushchev in 1953), but they supported the popular demand for the removal of Gero, who resigned on October 24 but persuaded his Soviet bosses to announce the change a day later. This delay, which prevented Kadar, his successor, and Nagy from taking control when their actions might have been helpful, contributed to the escalation of the uprising.

There are conflicting views about Soviet intentions in the period that followed. Some Hungarians said after the intervention, that the Russians were against their revolution from the very beginning and were just looking for an opportunity to suppress it. Other observers take the opposite view, for example, Molnar: "All the decisions made by Nagy between October 27th and 31st seemed to have been ratified by Moscow, including the re-establishment of former political parties and the withdrawal of troops." 16/

To be sure, the Soviet Union certainly expected a return to a normalized situation with an acceptable degree of socialist order and pro-Soviet subservience. But that does not mean that a military intervention was considered necessary or feasible to achieve this. If it had been, Moscow had only to step up its first intervention, bring in more troops, and commit them more decisively against the insurgents. The opposite happened: it not only limited Soviet troops' participation in the fighting but also

agreed on October 29 to withdraw them from the Hungarian cities.

This conciliatory mood was confirmed by Mikoyan and Suslov, who made another visit to Budapest on October 29 and 30, bringing with them the text of the official Soviet statement that was published October 30 and became famous as the "new chart" of the relations between the Soviet Union and other Communist countries. The document expressed the wish to correct Stalin's mistakes and to establish more equality. As far as Hungary was concerned, the statement asked the "peoples of the Socialist countries" not to "permit foreign or domestic reactionary forces to shake the foundation of the people's democracy system," and added: "The defense of socialist achievements by the people's democracy of Hungary is at the present moment the chief and sacred duty of the workers, peasants, intelligentsia and all the Hungarian working people" (emphasis added). In other words, the fear of counterrevolution was expressed, but it was admitted that the Hungarians could deal with it by themselves, as Nagy wanted. Even though the phrase "at the present moment" implied ominously that this could change, the goodwill was confirmed by the following statement: "The Soviet government is ready to enter into relevant negotiations with the government of the Hungarian People's Republic and other participants of the Warsaw Pact on the question of the presence of Soviet troops on the territory of Hungary."

Although this statement brought considerable detente in Hungarian-Soviet relations, it is nevertheless necessary to qualify the optimism expressed by Molnar in the quotation above. In my view, the Soviet Union had no intention, even at the last moment, of withdrawing its troops from Hungary



altogether. The statement of October 30 expressed only the wish to negotiate about a withdrawal, with the participation of other Warsaw Pact countries, which meant at best a long process. This was confirmed by Mikoyan, who said to the Hungarian leaders on October 30: "The Soviet troops which are not in Hungary by virtue of the Warsaw Pact will be withdrawn," 17/ meaning that while some troops could leave, the others would stay. In fact, Moscow was not ready to abandon the only means it had of keeping the troubled situation in check and wanted to keep three options open.

First, if Nagy (later Kadar) had managed to get the upper hand and to establish a satisfactory degree of control over the Communist party, the Soviet Union might have acted as promised in its statements, stopped its reinforcement, and progressively loosened its grip on the country. A protracted negotiation on complete withdrawal might have accompanied this process, though it is doubtful that even this result would have been achieved. After all, a satisfactory normalization, in Moscow's eyes, meant that the Hungarian leaders would prefer the presence of Soviet troops and drop their demand for withdrawal.

Another option was to use the confusion created by the withdrawal-no withdrawal game to maintain pressure and try to extract more concessions from the Hungarian leadership. The regrouping of forces implied complicated military moves that might be used as a threat.

The third option was to step up the second option and use the movement of troops not only to threaten but to prepare for an actual, and this time decisive, intervention.

The first option was clearly impracticable in view of the chaotic conditions in Hungary. To be sure, the country was beginning to stabilize

by the end of October, but in a way that was clearly not satisfactory to Moscow, with too limited a role for the Communist party and the nationalistic feelings of the population running high. The second option was probably considered when the offer of withdrawal talks was made by Mikoyan, but not for long.

It is hard to say at what moment the Kremlin decided to move from the second to the third option; but it was probably after October 30, when Mikoyan and Suslov, back in Moscow, reported on the situation. Certainly it was before the evening of November 1, when Janos Kadar, the party chief, disappeared from his home and defected to the Russians.

What decisions of the Hungarian government were considered beyond the threshold of acceptability? On October 30 Nagy announced that he was returning to a government "based on the democratic cooperation of a coalition of parties, as it was in 1945." He set up a new cabinet with only three representatives of the Communist party (Kadar, Pal Losonczi and himself), two of the Smallholders party, one of the National Peasant party, and one of the Social Democrat party (which refused the offer). But most of the actual power was in the hands of the workers' councils created in most regions, which established on October 31 a "parliament" for all the country. At the same time, the leaders of the insurgents, who had agreed to a cease-fire but were retaining their arms, publicly demanded the complete withdrawal of Soviet troops, the denunciation of the Warsaw Pact, and the proclamation of Hungarian neutrality. Last but not least, Communist supporters of the old regime and members of the AVH were subjected to repressive measures in the last days of October. Cases of lynching and summary executions were reported (215, according to a white book published later by the Kadar government).

All these measures and actions were in any case difficult for Moscow to swallow, even before Imre Nagy decided, on November 1, to accede to popular demand and withdraw from the Warsaw Pact. To be sure, recorded public statements support the view that this move made Moscow decide to intervene. Pravda on November 1 headlined its story on Hungary, "Budapest is back to normal" and expressed no criticism of the situation there; and a day later, it reprinted a critical comment of Belgrade's Politika, warning against any idea of restoring the bourgeois regime. (The tone was harsher on November 3 and 4, mentioning "anticommunist atrocities" in Hungary.) But the fact is that the proclamation of neutrality by Nagy was a desperate move in response to the growing threat of a military intervention that was, if not definitely decided upon, at least being actively prepared for by the Soviet Union.

The first turnabout of Soviet forces--which were supposed to leave the country, but actually remained and even came back by other roads--was reported on October 30 to Nagy by Maleter. From that day on, according to a UN special committee report, "troops were employed to encircle the Hungarian military aerodromes, ostensibly to ensure the safe evacuation of Soviet citizens, but in fact paralysing the Hungarian air force." At the same time, huge reinforcements were brought in from the Soviet Union and Rumania. According to Barber, "By the Wednesday [October 31], the roads leading into Hungary from the East were choked with Soviet military traffic, not only at Zahony [the crossing point from the Soviet Union], but at the frontier village of Nyirbator near Satu Mare in Rumania and at Battonya near Arad in Rumania." 18/ Some figures give an idea of this buildup: while the number of Soviet tanks in Hungary on October 30 did not exceed 400, according

to the UN report, the estimated force ready to crush the rebellion on the eve of November 4 included 2,000-2,500 tanks. As far as manpower is concerned, there were 200,000 Soviet troops in Hungary on November 4, ten times as many as at the beginning of the crisis on October 23, and as early as November 2 eight Soviet divisions, seven of them armored, were in Hungary. 19/ The following day, the Soviet Union sealed off the Hungarian-Austrian border.

Another indication of the Soviet determination to act is the change in their behavior on November 1. There was no longer any question of Mikoyan and Suslov visiting Budapest. Imre Nagy tried without success to telephone Mikoyan or Khrushchev to get an explanation of the Soviet military buildup. The only person he could find to talk to was the Soviet ambassador in Budapest, Yuri Andropov, with whom he had five conversations--on the phone or directly--the same day. But at that level, it is traditional Soviet behavior to use communications mainly for stalling for time and for deception. There were a number of examples of this behavior in the last three days of Hungarian "independence."

The only answer Andropov gave to Nagy's questions about the Soviet troop reinforcements was that "troops of the Interior Ministry[MVD] were sent to protect the evacuation of the regular army." And the only aim of the occupation of Hungarian aerodromes was to "supervise the evacuation of wounded and sick people." 20/ Since Andropov proposed at the same time to create two committees--one political, the other military--to discuss relations between the two countries, including the complete withdrawal of troops, the Hungarians may have felt that the situation was not that bad.

The first meeting of the Soviet-Hungarian military committee to discuss the withdrawal of Soviet troops was scheduled for November 3, a day

before the Soviet attack. The Soviet delegation, headed by General Malinin, went to the parliament building at noon. Everything went smoothly. The Russians produced a plan of gradual withdrawal. Their insistence on discussing details, including the organization of a military ceremony at the end of the process, made a very good impression on the Hungarians, who agreed without objection to a second meeting the same day, this time at Soviet headquarters on Csepel Island in Budapest. At 10 p.m. General Pal Maleter, who that day had become Hungarian defense minister, was greeted there by General Malinin with full military honors. One hour later he telephoned his office to say that everything was in order. At midnight, the meeting was interrupted by the sudden entrance of Soviet General Ivan Serov, head of the KGB, with an armed escort. After asking Malinin to leave the room, he placed Maleter and his group under arrest. At approximately the same time, Soviet tanks began to move all over the country to crush the new Hungarian regime.

This particularly crude example of deception must be regarded as a pattern of conduct decided at the highest level to achieve a specific result (in this case, the elimination of a man who might have played a crucial role in organizing the resistance) by whatever means available. It did not involve the men immediately concerned, like Malinin, who was reportedly upset by this violation of military ethics and probably was not informed about the upcoming incident. It was repeated later with Colonel Sandor Kopacsi, head of the Budapest police, who was invited, after the intervention, by a Russian "friend" to come to the Soviet embassy to discuss a possible truce; there he was arrested and interrogated by Serov personally. Last but not least, Imre Nagy, who had taken refuge on November 4 in the Yugoslav

embassy with an important group of his followers, left the embassy on November 22 after he and the Yugoslavs had received Kadar's written guarantee of their safety. No sooner had he reached the street than he was taken away by a Russian military convoy, despite the protests of the Yugoslav diplomats present at the scene.

The military operations that began on November 4 were conducted ruthlessly, unlike the rather passive conduct of the Soviet forces during the first intervention on October 24 and the following days. The objective this time was to take full control of everything in Budapest and to crush any resistance. At 8 a.m. on November 4, Parliament House was occupied after an ultimatum to surrender had been delivered (during the first intervention, Soviet forces had satisfied themselves with "protecting" the building from outside). In all other places, the answer to isolated fire was radical. According to Barber, "if one lone sniper fired a single bullet, retribution was swift and inevitable. Half a dozen tanks rolled to the building from where the shot had been fired and obliterated it." 21/

In these circumstances, resistance was possible only in a few more or less fortified places. One was the Kilian Barracks in Budapest (a stronghold of the rebellion during the first fighting in October) and at the Csepel metal factory in the southern part of the city, where the Russians had to use twelve battalions of troops, heavy artillery, and bombers. A week after this second intervention, the last resistance was crushed, but the casualties were heavy. According to official sources quoted by Molnar, "between October 23 and December 1st, 12,971 wounded received treatment in the hospitals, dispensaries and provisional aid stations." 22/ Molnar puts the number of deaths at 2,000 in Budapest and 700 in the provinces, Barber

at a minimum of 4,000 in Hungary. But these figures did not cover Soviet victims, whose number has never been officially revealed.

By the same token, there was no room for negotiations, even with the new "worker-peasant government" formed under the leadership of Kadar in support of the Soviet intervention. In fact, Kadar seems to have remained the first few days in Szolnok at the headquarters of the Soviet command in Hungary, from which his appeal was broadcast; he was not brought to Budapest until November 8. During these four days, orders were given directly to the population by Soviet General K. Grebennik, commander of the Soviet forces in the capital. Actually, Kadar did not have even the appearance of authority for many weeks, even months. Nagy was arrested by Soviet troops; and on December 4 and 5, a month after the Soviet intervention, Soviet tanks, not Hungarian troops, were stationed in front of the U.S. legation in Budapest to prevent an attempted demonstration.

Soviet attempts to legitimate their actions were more limited than their efforts twelve years later in support of their intervention in Czechoslovakia. The main theme of the propaganda was a description of "anticommunist atrocities," riots, and disorder, which made it imperative, as the Soviet delegate to the United Nations put it, "to protect Hungary against subversion." Curiously enough, Hungarian denunciation of the Warsaw Pact was less often mentioned as the prime cause of the Soviet action. This would have run counter to Khrushchev's "anti-bloc" diplomacy of the time. After all, Nikolai Bulganin, the Soviet prime minister, had explicitly "allowed" Hungary to make this move when he stated at the Geneva summit conference a little more than a year before: "Should any nation desiring to pursue a policy of neutrality and non-participation in military groupings . . . raise the question of having the

security and territorial integrity guaranteed, the great powers should accede to these wishes."

Czechoslovakia, 1968

The Soviet objectives in Czechoslovakia were very similar to what they had been in the two previous crises. Moscow wanted to maintain or restore the highest possible degree of socialist orthodoxy of the Soviet type: a monopoly of power by the Communist party, and, inside the party, a predominance of pro-Soviet friends and as little influence as possible for the liberals. Last but not least, it wanted the press strictly censored to prevent the expression of liberal and anti-Soviet views. The last was probably the most powerful single motivation for the military intervention. It is likely that some compromises would have been possible on other issues (notably on economic reforms) if Dubcek had been willing and able to bow to this demand.

But the achievement of these goals was made difficult by several considerations. First, unlike Poland where the Soviet leadership had first opposed Gomulka and then trusted him, Brezhnev had decided to abandon the previous leader, Antonin Novotny, to his fate and to accept the change of leadership. He did not select Dubcek, but he did not object to his appointment and chose to live with him, at least for a certain time.

Second, unlike Hungary, where the violent riots and the collapse of the Communist power structure demanded a quick decision, there was no spontaneous disorder at any time during the Czechoslovak spring. Dubcek and his colleagues could legitimately claim that they were in command of the situation, that no direct threat to Soviet interests was apparent,



and that all the changes took place inside the Communist party and in conformity with the party's statutes. Moscow could not have been satisfied with those explanations but must have found it difficult to define the point beyond which the situation became unacceptable. After all, it was embarrassing to decide on armed intervention because of an unpleasant article in the Prague press.

Finally, the Soviet Union had no troops in Czechoslovakia as it did in Hungary and Poland in 1956. It thus lacked one instrument of pressure that had been used in these two countries--military moves inside the country, reinforcements, maneuvers. Either troops had to be moved into the country, with all the political and diplomatic consequences of such a radical action, or the military pressure had to be exercised from outside the borders, which made it considerably less effective.

To be sure, the Soviet Union tried to correct this situation by introducing troops into Czechoslovakia at the end of May 1968 on the pretext of Warsaw Pact "staff maneuvers." Though these troops remained in the country for more than two months, their number was insufficient and their effectiveness as a political deterrent nearly nonexistent. In fact, one can argue that a steady reinforcement of this contingent similar to what took place in Hungary on October 30 to November 1, 1956, might have been another course of action. The maneuvers could have evolved into a creeping invasion of the country with the same outcome as the August intervention but with less dramatic overtones. But the Soviet leadership was probably not ready at the time to choose this option.

It is nearly impossible to keep track of all the meetings, communication and exchanges between Soviet and Czechoslovak leaders in this period.

Between January and early August 1968 there were no less than six "summits" between Dubcek and Brezhnev, two of which were in the broader setting of Warsaw Pact meetings. When Soviet demands (decisive actions against the liberal elements, censorship of the press) were not met, the pressure was increased in two areas: public criticism and military preparations.

Public criticism, as demonstrated by the two previous crises, is generally counterproductive. It may have an effect on the leaders of the target country by compelling them to offer some kind of reassurances. But when it is aimed at a populace that is enjoying a newly acquired freedom of expression, unilateral and frequently awkward propaganda outbursts in Soviet official media can only inspire anti-Soviet feelings and lead to a polemic in which the free writers of the target country easily get the upper hand. Nevertheless, Communist leaders cannot help but air their views publicly when their hostility to a given situation exceeds a certain degree of intensity and extends over a period of time. In the case of China and Albania, the period of patience lasted two or three years but eventually ended with devastating consequences.

Czechoslovakia being a softer target, the probation period was much shorter. By the end of March the East German press had started to criticize the dangerous rise of antisocialist forces in Czechoslovakia. In May East Germany went one step further by denouncing "counterrevolutionary forces," implying by that term a comparison with the Hungarian 1956 crisis and its crushing. Soviet criticism came later but a Central Committee meeting in March heard tough statements against "bourgeois reaction" and advocated tight ideological control in all socialist countries. On June 27 Gromyko stated in front of the Supreme Soviet that the "strengthening of the

commonwealth of socialist countries" is "the Soviet Union's primary duty in foreign policy": "Those who would like to break even one link in the chain of the socialist commonwealth are vain and shortsighted. This commonwealth will not permit it." 23/ Receiving Kadar in Moscow on July 3, Brezhnev mentioned the intervention in Hungary in 1956 as an illustration of the fact that "the Soviet Union can never be indifferent to the fate of socialist construction in other countries, to the common cause of socialism and communism in the world." 24/

The main charge was to come on July 14 at a conference of the USSR, GDR, Poland, Hungary and Bulgaria in Warsaw when Dubcek, for the first time, refused to attend. The so-called Warsaw letter brought into the open all the accusations against hostile forces supposedly at work in Czechoslovakia, described the situation there as "absolutely unacceptable for a socialist country," and stated: "This is no longer your concern alone . . . . The frontiers of the socialist world have shifted to the center of Europe, the Elbe and the Sumava mountains. We shall never consent to the endangering of these historic achievements of socialism . . . . The danger to the basis for socialism in Czechoslovakia threatens also the common interests of other socialist countries . . . . Each of our Parties had the responsibility not only to its own working class and its people, but also towards the international working class and the world communist movement and cannot avoid the obligations that flow from this." 25/

There was no mention of a military intervention, but a witness, Gomulka's interpreter, states that at least one participant, Bulgarian party chief Zhivkov, stressed the need of delivering any help to the "sound forces" in Czechoslovakia "not excluding military help." 26/

Thus the "Brezhnev doctrine" was formulated even before the August intervention, if only to legitimate the direct interference in Czechoslovak affairs brought about by this unusual letter. According to my information, no definite decision was made in Warsaw about a military action. It was left up to Moscow to decide if and when such action was necessary. Although the Czechoslovak public answer to the Warsaw letter was certainly not satisfactory to the Kremlin, Brezhnev and his colleagues decided to make another and last attempt at negotiation. This was done at the end of July at the Cierna meeting. It was a most unusual meeting, at which the Soviet leaders insisted on having the whole Czechoslovak Politburo in front of them, and even asked that everyone, according to former Czechoslovak foreign minister Jiri Hajek, 27/ speak in his own name. In addition, private meetings were arranged, first between Brezhnev and Dubcek, then, on the third day, between two smaller groups: Brezhnev, Podgorny, Kosygin, and Suslov from the Soviet side; Dubcek, Svoboda, Cernik, and Smrkovsky for the Czechoslovaks. According to Pavel Tigrid, the best-informed writer on the political developments of the crisis, this new setting brought about a notable improvement: "The greatest surprise of all was a moderate and appeasing statement by Suslov, who went so far as to call the Czechoslovak January policy (the changes made after Novotny was ousted) a renaissance of Marxism in a certain sense" and to agree that "the Czechoslovak question must be settled by agreement if great harm is not to ensue for the international communist movement and its unity." 28/ The meeting ended with an equivocal compromise. The

Czechoslovaks claimed that they did not concede anything essential, and the Russians promised that they would stop the polemics and withdraw the troops that remained in Czechoslovakia after the "staff exercises" of the early summer.

This result was confirmed by a new meeting of the five in Bratislava on August 4. The statement signed with Dubcek, to be sure, hinted at the Brezhnev doctrine ("It is the common internationalist duty of all socialist countries to support, strengthen and protect the socialist gains"), but did not actually mention the situation in Czechoslovakia and, to all intents and purposes, "forgot" the Warsaw letter.

It is important to examine how the various Soviet leaders viewed the situation and what the Cierna-Bratislava compromise was intended to accomplish: was it a deceptive trick to weaken the vigilance of the Czechoslovak people and of the outside world before an intervention that had already been decided upon, as some Czechs stated later, or a provisional but genuine attempt to find a peaceful solution? I support the latter view, if only because there are sufficient indications that the decision was not easily made. As Gomulka explains in his memoirs: "The Soviet comrades obviously were very disturbed by what was happening in Czechoslovakia . . . . However, to intervene in a socialist country is not a simple or easy matter . . . . It was necessary to weigh very carefully on the scale the pros and cons of the situation. Even in the Soviet leadership itself there was no unanimity as to the final balance of that account. I will tell you very frankly that the scale was tipping both ways until the last minute." 29/

All reports indicate that the most vociferous opponent of the Prague spring among the Soviet leaders was Pyotr Shelest, Politburo member

and first secretary of the Ukraine. Responsible for a territory adjacent to Czechoslovakia, he was reportedly particularly sensitive to the danger that liberal ideas might contaminate his own kingdom. It may be said generally that the regional leaders in the Soviet apparatus are more conservative than the top figures with central responsibilities, the latter being compelled to take into account broader, international considerations.

A major figure in the latter area was Suslov, a man with a long experience in international affairs, who was trying at the time to organize a new conference of the Communist movement. Two lesser figures were Boris Ponomarev and K. F. Katushev, secretaries of the central committee (but not Politburo members) in charge of day-to-day relations with other Communist parties. On the other hand, Kosygin was then more powerful than later and played an important role in foreign policy; he may have been more concerned than other leaders about the effects of a military intervention on East-West relations. It is not surprising that all the indications received about Politburo divergences place those men in the role of "doves."

A few months after Suslov introduced the idea of a compromise at Cierna, I learned from Eastern European sources that Suslov, Kosygin, and Ponomarev were mentioned in a Soviet intraparty document as the ones who had "underestimated the danger of counter-revolution in Czechoslovakia." Czechoslovak Prime Minister Oldrich Cernik, reporting to his cabinet after his return from Moscow on August 26, said privately that Suslov and Aleksandr Shelepin (chairman of the Trade Union Council and Politburo member) had reservations about the military intervention. 30/

Tigris describes an even stranger episode that occurred in Budapest at

the end of September 1968 during a preparatory meeting of the International Communist conference. Jozef Lenart, who as party secretary headed the Czechoslovak delegation at this meeting, received a private visit from Ponomarev and Katushev, who both expressed "personal regret" for the month-old invasion of his country: "According to Ponomarev, those chiefly responsible were the dogmatic and semi-fascist elements in the Soviet party's politburo, mainly military men and 'centrists' of the Brezhnev type, who 'had kept their district secretary mentality'. The Czechoslovak affair had apparently been severely censored by all the 'sensible' progressives in the Soviet party leadership but they were unluckily in the minority." 31/

It is unusual for a Soviet leader to reveal to a foreigner (even a Communist) so many details of Politburo deliberations; this report must therefore be considered with prudence. At the same time, the circumstances of the time were quite unusual too: one month after the invasion the result was nearly a complete failure politically, with Dubcek still in charge and the pro-Soviet conservatives in Prague more isolated than before. It is quite possible that the dovish minority of the Soviet leadership felt that their reservations were vindicated and tried, by blaming Brezhnev for the failure, to strike a bargain with the Prague ruling team.

A day after the Politburo had returned from Cierma to Moscow, a Pravda editorial supported the soft line ratified in Bratislava, stressing the need to solve by negotiation problems arising among socialist countries. But five days later, on August 11, new military maneuvers around Czechoslovakia were announced. On August 14, the presence of Grechko and Marshal Ivan Yakubovsky, the Warsaw Pact commander in East Germany, was mentioned. The Czechoslovaks learned later, according to my information, that both Soviet

marshals had said to their troops: "You will soon enter Czechoslovakia. You won't be greeted there with flowers." Also on August 14, the Soviet press resumed its attacks on Prague with an article in Literaturna a Gazeta. I believe that a negative reaction of the regional party leaders, who formed, as I have said, the conservative hard core of the Central Committee, increased the pressure to reject the "rotten compromise" of Cierna-Bratislava.

The technical preparations for a possible invasion of Czechoslovakia seem to have started as early as April 1968. This view is supported by Jiri Hajek 32/ and by other information I have received. For example, some people in Bratislava recognized in August, among Soviet officers of the occupation army, civilian "tourists" who had visited the city in April, probably to become familiar with the place of their future assignment. The exercises of June and July were for the same purpose. The maneuvers in mid-August on the Czechoslovak border were to serve as a cover for the important movements of troops--impossible to conceal in the middle of the tourist season--that were necessary before the intervention.

Various estimates have been given of the total number of troops engaged in the August 20-21 invasion. The Soviet armed forces had at that time a total of 3,220,000 men, including 2,000,000 in the army, which was made up of 140 divisions. In Central Europe, there were 20 Soviet divisions in East Germany, 2 in Poland, and 4 in Hungary, backed by 60 divisions in the western USSR. 33/ According to a Western estimate made after the first day of the invasion, ten Soviet divisions took part in the action, seven coming from East Germany, two from Poland, and one from the USSR. But these figures were soon increased. For example, the New York Times estimated the contingent of Soviet troops in Prague at only 25,000 men



the first day and, four days later, at 50,000, with two armored divisions and one mechanized division. 35/

Later, some Czechoslovak officials gave different estimates of the overall figures. Frybert, a Central Committee member speaking on August 31 at a plenary session, said that 250,000 men, 7,500 tanks, and 1,000 planes had been involved. 36/ Josef Smrkovsky, speaking to Soviet envoy Vasily Kuznetsov on September 11, mentioned a total invasion force of 500,000 men, including those of the four smaller Warsaw Pact countries that had joined the Soviet Union. 37/ Finally, General Martin Dzur, the Czechoslovak defense minister, reportedly said on August 18 that there were at the time 650,000 foreign troops in his country.

The knowledgeable British writer Adam Roberts sums up these different estimates this way: "Possibly the true figure is about 400,000, of whom at least three quarters were Soviet, with a maximum total of sixteen Soviet divisions plus one Soviet tactical air army and transport aircraft for logistic back-up . . . . There were perhaps as many as 50,000 Polish troops, perhaps 20,000 Hungarians, roughly the same number of East Germans, and fewer than 10,000 Bulgarians." 38/ I would accept the overall figure of 400,000, which corresponds to approximately twenty-nine divisions of that time, a number indicated by many observers and confirmed to me in a private conversation with the late Ion-Gheorghe Maurer, prime minister of Rumania. But it seems to me that the number of satellite country troops should be lower than Roberts' estimate and the Soviet figure accordingly higher. The Bulgarians, for example, played only a token role in Prague (protecting the airport and a few streets), the East Germans were more numerous but withdrew after a few days from their area (a small territory

near their border), and the Hungarians were hardly noticed during their brief stay in Slovakia. Clearly, the Soviet Union demanded from its allies much more political than military support.

The fact remains, as Roberts puts it, that the total forces used in the operation "were very roughly twice as numerous as the Soviet forces in Hungary in 1956," and almost as many as the United States had in Vietnam at that time (500,000). This was a sizable force, which, under the command of Soviet General Ivan Pavlovsky, vice minister of defense and commander-in-chief of the army, had prepared for a massive, quick invasion of "all Czechoslovak cities and regions," as Tass proudly stated in its first communique of August 21.

As in Hungary in 1956, the primary targets were the airports, notably Ruzyne near Prague, which was seized by deception in the first hour, 11 p.m. on August 20--an ostensibly civilian plane that had landed a few hours before was full of paratroopers who suddenly jumped out and took control of the field. This permitted a huge airlift (250 landings in the morning hours of August 21) to start operating at once. Incidentally, the airports were assigned a major role even in the later stages because of weakness of logistics in other areas. Leo Heiman, an Israeli military observer, noted that the land forces lacked trucks and other delivery systems, with the following result: "The airfields held by Soviet paratroops became the focal points of occupation. Only there did communications and logistics function properly." 39/

Though there was no fighting or attempt at guerilla resistance, there are strong indications that the Soviet commanders were prepared for this option too. It was reported that white stripes had been painted on many

military vehicles; Roberts notes that these signs "would have been useful for identification purposes if airpower had been called in by the invaders to crush the Czechoslovak armed forces." By the same token, "the amount of bridging equipment brought in also suggests that it was possible that the Czechoslovaks would fight, or at least engage in violent sabotage." 40/ Antiaircraft guns were deployed in most units, including one in the middle of a crowded square in central Prague. Another milder form of Czechoslovak resistance might have been to choke the airfields with various equipment to prevent landing. They did not do this, but the Russians were prepared for it. According to Heiman, they used a number of planes capable of landing in short distances and on grass, but carrying no more than ten soldiers. The same writer also mentions the large amount of ammunition carried by the troops and adds: "Their operational deployment indicated tactical preparedness for battle on the ground and in the air." 41/

No such battles took place, and the operation was carried out without any known casualty on the Soviet side, though Soviet commanders tried, for internal propaganda purposes, to persuade their troops that counterrevolutionary snipers might at any moment fire at them ("We have two or three deaths a day," I was told in Prague at the end of August by a Soviet sergeant, but without credible evidence). On the Czechoslovak side, casualties were due to isolated incidents or accidents and may have been overestimated in the anti-Soviet climate of the time. A letter addressed to Svoboda by the government and other authorities on August 25 mentions thirty dead and three hundred wounded in Prague alone. 42/

On September 13 Zdenek Mlynar, a liberal member of the Czechoslovak Politburo, said in a television broadcast that "up to today there were killed...more than 70 of our citizens." 42/

For those reasons, the Soviet forces had a less dangerous but perhaps a more difficult task. They had to occupy in a visible way the main streets and squares of the cities and a few important buildings in Prague (for instance, the Central Committee of the party, Parliament House, the Academy of Sciences, the Writers' Union, which their regular tenants had vacated, but their role was a static one, consisting only in enduring the insults of the population. The troops in the streets behaved with discipline. A pattern of behavior followed by the commanders when hostility mounted was to order that the engines of the tanks be started, to frighten the crowd away; if this was not enough, that the troops fire into the air (the facade of the National Museum on Václavské náměstí in Prague was damaged this way). But morale fell to a low level after a few days. Unable to explain to the numerous questioners what they were doing there since there were no counterrevolutionaries (more precisely, violent rioters) to shoot at, the only answer the Soviet soldiers could give was, "Ask Brezhnev."

The Soviet troops did not try to assume full control or carry out police functions, as they had in Hungary. They made no arrests, except for the few leaders--Dubcek, Cernak, Smrkovsky, Kriegel--whom they found at party headquarters the first night (those who had escaped before the arrival of the troops had no further problems). Their only active function was to attempt to track down the clandestine radio transmitters whose

broadcasts were coordinating and encouraging the passive resistance of the population. The results were disappointing, because of both poor logistics on their side and good organization on the Czechoslovak side. As Heiman explains it, "the Soviets utilized a fleet of radio direction finding (R.D.F.) trucks, helicopter and jamming transmitters, but it took them more than a week to get the R.D.F. units into position. Their R.D.F. equipment was helpless against more modern Czechoslovak techniques such as bouncing beams, switchover relays, and frequency changes." 44/

To sum up, the behavior of Soviet forces in Czechoslovakia after August 20 was more like their behavior in Hungary during the first intervention (between October 24 and 29, 1956) than after the second one (November 4). On the latter occasion, the Soviet forces had not only a clear target--the armed insurgents, who had to be crushed--but a clear political prospective. A new government had been formed (under Kadar) to take the place of the previous one (under Nagy), which had been declared illegal; they had to clear the way for Kadar to take office. This could not be done in Czechoslovakia for two reasons.

First, in Hungary, the original idea was to create a new pro-Soviet government which the Red Army was to "assist." But the big difference--and the main weakness in the political planning--was that this government was not set up in advance. Subsequently, all attempts to form such a government failed. Conversely, the Soviet forces were not prepared to act alone, for example, by imposing a military government. In October 1956 Gero received Soviet help, but in insufficient quantity and without the willingness to act that was crucial in the dramatic circumstances of the time. In Prague in 1968, the help was there, far more than necessary, but there was nobody to make use of it.

Second, when this failure became apparent, the Soviet leaders decided to bow to Svoboda's demand and bring Dubcek to Moscow in order to "negotiate" with him. This restored some legitimacy and political orderliness to the process, but it did not change the ambiguous mission of the Soviet forces. Whereas before they had nobody to deal with or to put in command, now there was someone but he did not want them.

The first failure, though surprising, should not lead to the conclusion that the political framework of the intervention was completely neglected. Some observers like Roberts have even suggested that the military intervention was scheduled on a Tuesday night because the Czechoslovak Politburo had its weekly meeting on that day. Actually, the plan was to encourage the pro-Soviet members of this body to launch a political offensive against Dubcek that same evening that would put him in the minority and to name a new first secretary who would have called for (or, more precisely, welcomed) military help. The attempt was made, but could not be pushed further after the pro-Soviet elements discovered that they were a minority of four instead of the expected majority of six (out of eleven members). The Politburo instead of censuring Dubcek, adopted a resolution condemning the intervention, the publication of which could not even be prevented.

This failure was largely the fault of S. V. Chervonenko, the Soviet ambassador in Prague, whose responsibility it was to inform the Soviet leadership of the different trends inside the Czechoslovak party and to maintain contact with the pro-Soviet conservative elements. At a higher level, there was apparently a certain lack of coordination during the whole crisis. Too many people were involved successively in the negotiations with Prague (mostly Brezhnev, but also Kosygin and Grechko, who made separate trips),

and this may have had a demoralizing effect on the people in charge of the day-to-day management of the crisis. A permanent team, like that of Mikoyan-Suslov during the Hungarian events, would have been more effective.

After the invasion, however, and given the political mismanagement, the ball was again in the Soviet Politburo's court, as in Cierna. The negotiation, which took place in Moscow on August 23-26 between the leaders of the two countries, was one of the most peculiar in modern times. The apparent strategic predominance of the Kremlin could not conceal one major weakness: it had to deal with the very leaders it had labeled "revisionists" and needed their help to get out of the political mess the intervention had produced. To be sure, Moscow had the option of imposing a military government on Prague. This was the threat it used to persuade the Czechoslovak leaders, but it had to be mindful of the further deterioration of Soviet international prestige that such a move would have created.

Tactically, the Russians' position was strong, and they used it to advantage. The Czechoslovak delegation was virtually held prisoner and received almost no information from Prague (had they been aware of the high level of popular resistance they would have been less flexible). The Russians insisted that the delegation consist of members of their own choosing, including in it their friends Vasil Bilak and Alois Indra (Though the latter was only a party secretary and not a politburo member). The "bad part" of it--Dubcek, Cernik, Smrkovsky, and other leaders who had been captured in Central Committee headquarters--arrived at the end of the first day still as prisoners, unshaven and ill dressed, and were immediately insulted by Brezhnev and his colleagues.

The results of the talks fall into two parts: the public one and the classified one. For the public, the Moscow diktat was relatively mild (it had to be to avoid further exacerbating anti-Soviet feeling). The communique announced that "the troops of the allied countries that entered temporarily the territory of Czechoslovakia will not interfere in the internal affairs (of the country). Agreement was reached on the terms of withdrawal of these troops from its territory as the situation in Czechoslovakia normalizes." The communiqué was too vague about political matters to be impressive: "It was stated by the Czechoslovak side that all the work of Party and State bodies through all media would be directed at ensuring effective measures serving the socialist power, the guiding role of the working class and the communist Party, the interests of developing and strengthening friendly relations with the peoples of the Soviet Union and the entire socialist community." <sup>45/</sup> This was little more than had already been stated in Bratislava, but it was only the tip of the iceberg.

The secret protocol that the Czechoslovak leaders had to sign dotted the i more carefully, which is why it specified that both parties "would consider as strictly confidential all contacts between [them] after August 20, 1968. This agreement thus also covers the talks that have just been concluded." Fortunately, the text of this document was smuggled to the West and published. It stated that the "so-called 14th Party congress" (a clandestine meeting of this body, held in a Prague factory a day after the invasion, had renewed the Central Committee and expelled from it all the conservative elements) would be considered void, and that the Central Committee (in its former composition) would meet in six to ten days to "dismiss from office all those whose conduct in their posts would not



promote the imperative task of reinforcing the leading role of the working class and the communist party." 46/

For their part, the Czechoslovaks had to promise that they "would not tolerate that Party workers and officials who struggled for the consolidation of socialist positions against anti-socialist forces and for friendly relations with the USSR be dismissed from their posts or suffer reprisals." In other words, the Czechoslovaks would have to keep some of their most hated leaders, such as Alois Indra, who had supported the intervention and who had even been proposed to Svoboda as a candidate to form a new government. There was no explicit mention of press censorship (the word is considered bad taste in Communist language), but the Czechoslovaks had to promise "new laws and regulations" in this area, "measures with a view to controlling the information media," and "a reallocation of leading posts in the press, radio and TV."

In the military area, the formulation was different from that of the official communique. The protocol said: "A treaty concerning the stationing and the final withdrawal of the allied troops will be concluded." The contradiction in the terms "stationing" and "final withdrawal" recalls the situation in Hungary in the final days of October 1956 and may be explained the same way. Moscow was not willing at the time to openly state its objective, which was to maintain Soviet troops in Czechoslovakia permanently. This stick was imposed less than two months later, but at the moment only the carrot--the withdrawal of other, non-Soviet troops--was shown.

The signing of the agreement marked the beginning of a long process: the Russians knew that their partner was unreliable and that this half-measure had to be followed at a later date by what they had looked for from the

beginning: the replacement of Dubcek by a "better" man and the purge of the liberals in the party. For that purpose, they used different tactics simultaneously.

1. They continued the direct pressure on Dubcek, as before the invasion. Other meetings were held, approximately once a month. On October 2, in Moscow, Brezhnev became very angry again, accusing the Czechoslovaks of having admitted to their Central Committee new liberal elements who might even be "Western agents." (The Central Committee meeting held at the end of August in Prague did not produce the results agreed upon in the Moscow protocol and reinforced the liberal wing in the leadership.) In a typical joke, the Soviet leader proposed to compensate for the stationing of Soviet troops in Czechoslovakia by deploying a Czechoslovak contingent to Russia--on the Sino-Soviet border. He stated that he did not care about the reaction of Western Communist parties (largely hostile to the intervention) since there was no chance of a Communist takeover in Europe "before fifty years." 47/

At the same time the USSR consolidated its military grip on the country. This was achieved with the treaty on the stationing of Soviet troops, signed October 16 in Prague. This document--rarely published in other Communist countries--had interesting contradictions. It stated that "the number of and places of location of Soviet troops [in Czechoslovakia] will be determined by agreement" between the two governments. 48/ But since other provisions (articles 4 and 5) specified that Soviet troops and members of their families could travel both ways without passport or visa control, it made it nearly impossible for the Prague authorities to keep track of the actual number of their "guests."

This number varied considerably both before and after the treaty. According to the New York Times, 450,000 foreign troops remained in Czechoslovakia at the end of September, but this figure had to be reduced to 100,000 (Soviet forces only) within two months after the signing of the treaty. 49/ U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk stated on December 1, 1968, that three to four Soviet divisions (approximately 45,000 to 60,000 men) remained in Czechoslovakia. 50/ But when another push was made at the end of March to oust Dubcek from the leadership, Grechko himself announced to the Prague leaders that his contingent of troops in Czechoslovakia had recently been increased by 35,000 men. 51/ Actually, the Rusk estimate seems to have been low, and the actual figure of the "Central Group" (the name given to the Soviet forces in Czechoslovakia) stabilized in the following years at five divisions, about 75,000 men. 52/ This was more than in Poland (two divisions) or in Hungary (four divisions).

3. The Kremlin intervened more directly in Czechoslovak political affairs. On the other hand, it tried to break down the solidarity of the ruling group in Prague by attacking certain elements and flattering others. Ludvik Svoboda and Gustav Husak, at that time head of the party in Slovakia, received only good words; Josef Smrkovsky, chairman of the parliament and a leading figure of the liberal movement, was singled out for criticism. Brezhnev himself, at a meeting in Kiev on December 11 with Dubcek, Svoboda, Cernik, Husak, and Lubomic Strougal, called him "the leader of rightist forces in the [Czechoslovak] Party." 53/ Despite a pledge made by Dubcek, Svoboda, Cernik and Smrkovsky in August to stick together, this tactic succeeded and Smrkovsky had to relinquish more and more of his functions.

On the other hand, a new effort was made to encourage conservative

and pro-Soviet elements at all levels. Pravda played up any friendly demonstrations staged by "old" and "good" Communists. In Prague, Vasily Kuznetsov, first deputy foreign minister of the USSR, who had been selected to carry out a long survey of the normalization in September (paralleling the weak ambassador Chervonenko), insisted on arranging the visit of a large number of Soviet delegations, setting up sister cities in the USSR and Czechoslovakia, and so forth. These clumsy attempts to promote organized friendship could not work well in the circumstances, but they were intended to multiply the Soviet presence and help Moscow's isolated supporters overcome their shyness.

This combination of pressure and "salami tactics" might already have achieved the desired result in January 1969 had not the suicide of young Jan Palach, who set himself on fire, renewed tension in the population. A visit by Konstantin Katushev (the young Soviet party secretary who seemed to have advocated a softer line two months before) on January 2, 1969, had conveyed a harsh message from Moscow, leading Dubcek to speak of "crisis" and "tragic conflict." Cernik, according to Tigrid, warned privately that if there was no consolidation of the situation "the Soviets would simply stop dealing with us and would turn to others." 54/

The decisive push came at the end of March, after a victory of the Czechoslovak team over the Russians in the ice hockey championship in Stockholm had created an outburst of nationalist feeling in Czechoslovakia that led to an incident--perhaps provoked--against the Aeroflot office in Prague. Three days later, on March 31, Grechko arrived unexpectedly. According to Tigrid, he asked for "radical and immediate measures" and presented a three-part ultimatum: the Czechoslovak leadership was to

put its own house in order, which included the cessation of all internal discussion, censorship of the press, and a "reinforcement of security organs"; if it could not, it was to ask the Soviet troops to do it; or the Warsaw Pact forces would intervene on their own initiative.

Because of the moral and political exhaustion of Dubcek, his growing isolation in the leadership, and the new vigor of the conservative forces resulting from the preparatory work of the preceding period, the ultimatum succeeded. Two weeks later, on April 17, 1969, Husak, having been proposed by Svoboda, was elected first secretary of the party to replace Dubcek. The first hard measure of normalization (ousting liberals, censoring the press and banning some publications, rehabilitating Moscow collaborators, and even approving the Soviet intervention) began in the ensuing weeks and months. It is interesting that after more than a year of pressure from so many people, the decisive result was finally achieved by Grechko, the Soviet defense minister who was not even at that time a Politburo member (he was not promoted to that function until 1973) and had never before been assigned such political negotiations. The military had to finish the job, which they had been well prepared to do at their own level in August 1968, but which had been badly mishandled by the political authorities. The rise of the military's power and support of their interests in the Soviet structure in the years that followed may have had to do at least partially with recognition of this.

### The Soviet Targets

#### Poland, 1956

In this rare success story of resistance to Soviet pressure, nothing would have been possible without the attitude of the Polish people, almost unanimously aligned behind Gomulka and ready to oppose Soviet interference by all available means. The same popular determination existed in Hungary but only insofar as resistance to the Soviet Union was concerned; on all other matters, including support of Imre Nagy and the Communist party in its new configuration, there was no unity in the population. In Poland the regime was certain to remain socialist and led by the Communist party. The powerful Catholic Church, for example, under the leadership of Cardinal Stefan Wyszynski supported Gomulka completely, while Cardinal Josef Mindszenty in Hungary wanted an end to the socialist regime and ignored the Nagy government.

The only Polish group supporting the USSR, the Natolinists, represented less than one-third of the Central Committee, judging from the number of votes (23 out of 75) Soviet Marshal Rokossovsky obtained in favor of his candidacy on October 20. Without Soviet support, this group would not have represented a serious threat to Gomulka and the reformers, especially since its lack of popular support prevented it from acting openly.

Gomulka had a limited group of personal supporters; since he was in jail or in political isolation until the spring of 1956, he could not develop a constituency of his own in the party. That is why, when he was coopted into the Central Committee on October 19, before Khrushchev's arrival, he was accompanied by only three people: Zenon Kliszko, Marian Spychalski, and Ignacy Loga-Sowinski.

But the crucial role was played by what might be called the "transition team," the leaders already in office, who were initially sympathetic to

the Natolinists and supported by them, but who turned away from them as the destalinizing wind blew from Moscow in 1956, after the Twentieth Party Congress. A key man on this team was undoubtedly Edward Ochab, first secretary of the party, who decided, in a rare spirit of self-sacrifice, to open the way to Gomulka as his successor. Ochab was followed by Prime Minister Jozef Cyrankiewicz, a former socialist who had sacrificed his party on the Communist altar in 1948. Basically an opportunist, he followed the new course and managed to keep his post throughout the Gomulka era.

One wonders how old-time orthodox Communists faced the prospect of a confrontation with the Soviet Union, even of a fight against Soviet troops if necessary. In neither of the other cases under study can similar determination be found in such a large group of leaders. Traditional Polish patriotism and courage must have played a role. Even in Stalin's time, the Poles had managed not to show excessive zeal in copying the Soviet "model" and had avoided the torture and executions that were commonplace in most Communist countries (Gomulka and his associates, though ousted politically, were not harmed throughout the Stalinist period).

The situation in the army was particularly interesting. Theoretically, the presence at its head of Rokossovsky, with other Natolinists in important positions (notably Kazimierz Witaszewski, the deputy minister of defense), should have made it a powerful force serving the anti-Gomulka camp, but this was not the case. To be sure, the army was put on alert for a few weeks before the crisis. It might have backed the plot of the Natolinists if they had carried it out then; but, except for a few movements of troops, its role was extraordinarily passive. Lower-level officers obviously

sympathized with the pro-Gomulka forces and might have neutralized any attempt at violent action, which is probably why the decisive orders were never given them.

On the other side, a strong force in favor of Gomulka was composed, curiously enough, of the police and security organs, which together numbered 50,000 men. Normally, these types of forces, as was the case in Hungary, are the last bulwark of orthodox Communist regimes, but in August 1956 under the unofficial influence of Gomulka they had switched to the other side. Their new commander, General Wacław Komar, had been jailed in Stalin's time and was actively dedicated to the cause of reform. Komar deployed his forces and agents to keep track of the Natolinists and the movements of Soviet forces; at the same time, he used contacts at lower levels of the army to neutralize Rokossovsky's possible moves.

Another major figure in the organization of the resistance was Stefan Staszewski, party secretary in Warsaw, who discreetly mobilized the population and arranged with Komar and some army commanders to have arms distributed to factory workers. How effective this resistance would have been if the Soviet Union had decided on a military intervention is not known, but certainly such an action would have been met with guerilla warfare. This was probably the most important single factor to deter Khrushchev from this course.

On the crucial night of October 19-20, this determination to resist was shown to Khrushchev and his colleagues at two levels. In the talks, Gomulka, Ochab, Komar, and others, though they tried to refute Soviet accusations, refused to be impressed by Khrushchev's veiled threats. According to Bethell, Gomulka countered with a threat of his own: "Others say that Gomulka threatened to address the Polish people on the radio,



tell them what was going on and call on them to fight the Soviet forces.... It is known that Polish radio was told to be ready for a broadcast from Gomulka on the night of October 19." 55/ But there was other action. Gibney reports that on the same night "the main strength of Komar's troops was deployed around the city of Warsaw, in the way of any action from the Soviet garrisons. Early on Saturday morning (October 20), one of Komar's detachments had in fact stopped a tank column of the Soviet army at Sochaczew, some 25 miles west of Warsaw. No one fired but the army column turned back." 56/ Bethell confirms these facts and adds: "Members of the Polish air force were constantly aloft, reporting on the movement of Soviet troops. Throughout the discussion, both delegations were receiving information from their military men....Workers from Warsaw factories, especially the Zeran car works, were being armed and deployed, ready to defend the capital." 57/

If the 375,000 men of the Polish army, prevented from playing an active role by the reciprocal neutralization of the two opposing forces . . . operating on them are excluded, the forces at the disposal of the Polish leadership were limited indeed. But their deployment was organized, action was coordinated at the political level, and they had popular support. It is fair to assume that the outcome in Czechoslovakia in 1968 might have been very different if Dubcek, whose political situation was similar to that of Gomulka, had taken similar measures before August 20.

Finally, there was the behavior of Gomulka himself, who, unlike Nagy and Dubcek, was determined to resist the liberal trends and, unlike Dubcek, was motivated by strong personal conviction. He had pleased Khrushchev in November 1956 by telling the Soviet leader exactly what he wanted to hear. In his interview after his fall, he was quite explicit about his allies

of the time, the liberal Communists: "They were noisy fellows, they talked without stop about democracy, about changes, about some kind of a revolution, while what we needed was obedience and discipline; what we had to talk about was not some kind of great freedoms but rather something quite the opposite. I had to get rid of those people from the party...My job actually was to turn around that Polish ship 180 degrees and sail in the opposite direction." 58/

Gomulka consequently had no difficulty in giving the Soviet leaders the assurances they wanted about "socialist order," his only demand being that he be able to apply this policy progressively. But he also had the courage to state some of his positions publicly from the beginning, taking the risk of disappointing his supporters. For example, he said on October 20, the very day of his promotion to head of the party: "We must give a decisive rebuff to all voices and whispers that aim at weakening our friendship with the Soviet Union...If anyone imagines he will be able to sow moods of antisovietism in Poland, he is making a deep mistake:" 59/ Four days later, in a huge popular meeting in Warsaw, he opposed the demand that Soviet forces be withdrawn from the country, stating that their presence was "directly connected with the presence of Soviet forces in the G.D.R." and "in accordance with our highest state interests." 60/

#### Hungary, 1956

There is no point in trying to keep track of all the political or social groupings involved in the Hungarian crisis, which was much more confused than either of the other two crises described here. The non-Communist political parties that appeared during the revolution had little time to organize themselves. Even though some of their leaders were given functions in the successive Nagy governments, these governments were powerless.

Cardinal Mindszenty's role has often been described as evidence of the counterrevolutionary character of the uprising or, alternatively, of Nagy's weakness, but it must be pointed out that the cardinal made his only public statement a few hours before the second Soviet intervention, at a moment when hardly anything could have changed the Soviet decision. This is why it seems preferable to focus on three groups or forces: Nagy himself, the various armed groups involved in the crisis, and Janos Kadar.

1. The evolution of Imre Nagy from an old-time Communist to a true revolutionary and national hero is one important factor explaining the outcome of the crisis. His weakness--indecision, inability to dominate the situation, and lack of a clear-cut strategy--have been described by all observers. As Molnar sums it up: "He was always 24 hours late in reacting to public demands but nevertheless 24 hours ahead of the Party leaders." 51 It can be said in his favor that he assumed power in the worst possible circumstances, even, in the first two crucial days, being a physical hostage of Gero, who hoped to discredit him in the eyes of the public. His main task was to restore order, and the only way to do it was to make concessions to the insurgents, since the only counterforce nominally at his disposal, the AVH, was hostile to him. This brought him into growing conflict with the Russians.

In the last days of October, he realized that Moscow's duplicity about the withdrawal of Soviet troops was the main obstacle to normalizing the situation. His proclamation of neutrality on November 1 pushed him into the camp of the revolution; at that moment only, he became a leader and moved ahead of events. Though this came too late and could only precipitate tragic consequences, Nagy made it clear even after the intervention that

he did not regret his move. In a sort of political will dictated to a secretary on November 4 and quoted by Barber, he made his break with Moscow: "Today it is Hungary and tomorrow it will be the turn of other countries, because the imperialism of Moscow does not know borders; it is only trying to play for time." He later admitted that "the revolution went far beyond its aims and that is why it failed." 62/ But his martyrdom was a reconciliation of his old belief with his dedication to his people. He said before his execution, "If my life is needed to prove that not all Communists are enemies of the people, I gladly make the sacrifice." 63/

2. Another problem for Nagy was that he had to fight the insurgents before becoming their ally. The insurgents, who were to become famous as the "freedom fighters," were neither an organized force nor a powerful one: at the beginning, no more than 2,000 men in Budapest, mainly in the Kilian Barracks in Pest; at the end, perhaps 50,000 men including the estimated 30,000 workers who offered the strongest organized resistance to the second Russian intervention on Csepel Island. With strong leadership such as Poland had, the riot of October 23 would have been easily crushed, even with only the 30,000 men of the AVH. But other forces acted on their own and their sympathy for the insurgents contributed to the escalation.

In the first place, there was the police force, which under the command of Sandor Kopacsi, a thirty-six year-old colonel, rose against the Gero-Hegedus government very early: Kopacsi reportedly ordered his personnel to help the insurgents as early as October 24. A second element was part of the army, in which two men played major roles. One was General Bela Kiraly, commander-in-chief in Budapest, who from the first night of the rebellion had been aware that his troops sympathized with the insurgents

and who supported Nagy. A week later, he was put in charge of the national guard, a new force combining the Budapest police and the pro-Nagy insurgents with approximately 10,000 men and Kopacsi as deputy commander. Another military hero of the revolution was Colonel Pal Maleter. As a young officer on duty in the Ministry of Defense the night of October 23, he was sent by his superiors to the Kilian Barracks to restore order. After a short hesitation, he decided to join the insurgents and became their commander. He was later named minister of defense in the last Nagy cabinet and was arrested the same day by the Russians

The attitude of these officers does not mean that the army as a whole switched to the insurgent side or played an active part one way or the other. On the contrary, there was in Hungary, despite the violent action, the same pattern of behavior as in the other crises under study here: at the top, a division between a few pro-Soviet officers, another group of people ready to side with a popular patriotic rebellion, and a larger group of uncommitted commanders; in the rank and file, strong sympathy for the insurgents and, generally speaking, great reluctance to assume repressive functions. Add to that the presence in the upper echelons of Soviet advisers and their probable doubts about the reliability of the troops and you have a virtual neutralization of the regular army in such crises.

During the first part of the revolution, the two regiments sent by Gero to Budapest on October 23 had little ammunition (probably because of the distrust of the authorities) and immediately demonstrated their sympathy for the insurgents, notably in front of the radio station. A number of students at the military academies joined the rebellion, and certain units distributed their arms to the population. The opposite

happened in Szeged and Kecskemet, where the army briefly attacked the insurgents. In Pecs, one pro-Gero commander disarmed his unit to prevent it from joining the rebellion. At Szolnok, according to Molnar, "the Hungarian army kept to its barracks, although the town was also one of the most important Soviet garrison towns, with a military aerodrome." 64/ The fact is that the army as such (at least no organized unit) did not fight the Soviet troops directly. Even before the decisive Soviet intervention, when the movements of troops were the only action and no shooting took place, the Hungarian army does not seem to have opposed the occupation of Hungarian airports by Soviet forces: the only such place to be held by the Nagy government was a small airport in Budaors with two airplanes only, perhaps forgotten by the Soviet command. At the last moment, Kiraly suggested that Nagy use it to flee abroad, but the prime minister preferred to take refuge in the Yugoslav embassy.

The neutralization of the army made the fight even more hopeless. According to Barber, Nagy's first reaction when he learned from the Yugoslav embassy on November 4 that the Russians were moving into Budapest was to order Kiraly not to fight. A few minutes later, however, he said in his last radio proclamation: "Our troops are fighting." 65/ General Kiraly had this day held a secret meeting with his officers in the Jesuit monastery of Manresa in Buda. According to Barber, about half of the participants proposed a cease-fire; finally a majority of them, including Kiraly, decided to resist the invasion. But even after that, only small groups of insurgents, the Csepel factory workers and a part of the national guard did the fighting, not the army. The Kiraly group was the luckiest; it succeeded in holding out in Buda until November 9, then withdrew to Nagykovacs, where it was attacked by Soviet tanks and MIG fighters on

November 11. Finally, it managed to cross the border to Austria.

3. The behavior of Janos Kadar is another important element and probably, even now, the most mysterious. This long-time Communist (though only forty-five years old at this time, he had been a party member since 1929) who had been tortured under Rakosi, had every reason to sympathize with the new course and with Nagy himself, who, as prime minister, had helped free him from prison in 1954. Until the evening of November 1, there is no indication of any serious disagreement between Kadar and Nagy. To be sure, his first statement as party first secretary on October 25 was tougher than Nagy's, denouncing the "armed aggression against the authorities of the People's democracy," which "must be repulsed by every means at our disposal." 66/ But his perspective seems to have been similar to that of the prime minister, in increasingly favoring the objectives of the revolution and even turning against the Russians. On the crucial day of November 1, Kadar unquestionably supported the calls for neutrality and Soviet withdrawal; according to Barber, he said to Soviet Ambassador Yuri Andropov in the presence of a few other people: "I am ready as a Hungarian to fight if necessary. If your tanks enter Budapest, I will go into the streets and fight against you with my bare hands." 67/

But there is better evidence of his attitude in the speech he broadcast at 9:40 p.m. that same day: "Our people has shed its blood in order to show its unshakable desire to support the government's demand for the total withdrawal of Soviet forces. We no longer wish to exist in a state of dependence." At the same time, however, he expressed his concern about the situation and stated that the country was at a "crossroad": "Either the Hungarian democratic parties will be strong

enough to consolidate their victory or we shall find ourselves faced with a counterrevolution. . . .The Hungarian youth did not shed its blood to see Rakosi's tyranny replaced by the tyranny of the counterrevolution." Later he mentioned "the fate of Korea" to warn against "foreign intervention." 68/

In other words, at that moment he was ready to go along with the revolution and accepted the situation as it had developed: a government with the "democratic parties" consolidating their "victory," pursuing a nonaligned neutral policy without Soviet troops or other interference. But he certainly wanted to stop there; some of the developments of the next three days, such as the open appearance of rightist parties and Cardinal Mindszenty's appeals to get rid of any "heirs and participants of a bankrupt system," would not have had his support anyway. As chief of the remnants of a party that was now only part of a broader coalition, Kadar could stay some distance from the government while Nagy, in the thick of events, was carried away by them and could not concentrate on the basic issues.

Still, Kadar's disappearance a few hours after this radio broadcast came as a complete surprise: even his wife was not informed and came to the parliament building the next day to ask about his whereabouts. Barber gives the best account of how it happened by furnishing two interesting pieces of information. The first is the account of an unidentified Western journalist who on the evening of November 1 had an interview with Ferenc Munnich, minister of the interior. During the conversation, Munnich received a telephone call in which he conversed in Russian. The topic of the talk appeared to be "an appointment in half an hour, together with Kadar." The other item is the account of a driver for the government who drove Munnich and Kadar that same night to a park near the Kerepes cemetery in a



Budapest suburb. A Soviet ZIS car was waiting there, but, according to this report, Munnich had to push Kadar into it: "It appeared that Kadar was unwilling to enter the car. He looked as though he could not make up his mind." 69/ The end of the story is better known. Kadar was taken to the Soviet embassy in Budapest and, an hour later, to a nearby Soviet military aerodrome where he boarded a plane that took him to the Soviet Union; he is known to have spent a few days in Uzhgorod, the Soviet city closest to the Hungarian border, and it seems likely that he also went to Moscow to speak with Khrushchev.

Some of those details may be questionable, but it is not too difficult to reconstruct the main elements. Kadar's public speech of a few hours before shows that he was not prepared to betray Nagy and his government so soon. Clearly his sudden change was motivated by an external factor, probably a message he received--from Munnich or Andropov--that the Kremlin had decided to break with Nagy and crush the revolution. Faced with this unavoidable outcome, he chose, after some hesitation, to endorse the move in order to save what he might of the new course.

That makes it difficult to completely accept Kadar's own interpretation of his decision, which he gave, for example, to a New York Times correspondent twenty-two years later, saying that "there would have been virtual civil war in Hungary" and it was only "to avoid bloodshed that we asked the Soviet Union for help." 70/ However, the bloodshed in Hungary was subsiding when Kadar changed sides; the Soviet intervention resulted in much greater bloodshed. Also, it is quite clear that the Soviet Union had decided to "help" before being asked, at least by him. Not surprisingly, Moscow used Ferenc Munnich, previously a socialist leader but one aligned with the Soviet Union since the late 1940s, to bring Kadar over to its side.

### Western Behavior

The behavior of Western powers after the first Soviet intervention in Hungary had clearly indicated to the Soviet Union that it need not expect much trouble from this side. The United States, the United Kingdom, and France did not ask for a meeting of the UN Security Council until October 27 (three days later) and no resolution was introduced until November 3. But on October 31, the day the Russians must have decided to take action against Nagy, British and French forces landed along the Suez canal. This offered Khrushchev the best opportunity he could have wished for to divert attention and denounce Western imperialism.

Eisenhower, who had said on October 21 that he could not resort to force to promote self-government in Eastern Europe, states clearly in his memoirs the dilemma he faced: "Hungary could not be reached by any U.N. or U.S. units without traversing neutral territory. Unless the major nations of Europe would, without delay, ally themselves spontaneously with us (an unimaginable prospect), we could do nothing. Sending United States troops alone into Hungary through hostile or neutral territory would have involved us in a general war." 71/

Since any military operation behind the iron curtain was excluded, the only action contemplated by the West to help the Hungarians was sending or UN observers to Budapest. The Soviet Union rejected the request, which had been approved by the UN General Assembly on November 4; not until December did the Kadar government hint it might accept, but then it was too late. Many people thought that Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold should have challenged the Soviet refusal and landed in Budapest without the agreement of the local authorities. Instead, Hammarskjold went to Egypt, encouraging the accusation of a double standard.

Another embarrassment for the U.S. administration was the behavior of Radio Free Europe, which broadcast to Eastern Europe. Quite irresponsibly, the station poured oil on the fire of the Hungarian uprising by its criticism of Nagy and its appeals to the population to continue the fighting after the cease-fire of October 29, even explaining to listeners how to prepare Molotov cocktails. Presumably, either this was done without the knowledge of the American government or a double standard was applied, because the proclaimed official policy implied a recognition of some sort of moderate communism and a willingness to cooperate with it. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles said in a speech given in Dallas on October 27, 1956: "We do not look upon these nations [of Eastern Europe] as potential military allies...Nor do we condition economic ties between us upon the adoption by these countries of any particular form of society." 72/

#### Czechoslovakia, 1968

There were three main groups of political forces during the Czechoslovak crisis.

First, there was the conservative, or pro-Soviet, group, which was in the minority early in the spring, after the elimination of Novotny and his personal followers such as Jiri Hendrich. This group cannot be identified completely with the team of the former party first secretary, since the main figures in it were either people from the mid-level apparatus of Novotny's time who had accepted part of the "January policy" (such as Alois Indra, Oldrich Svestka, Jan Piller, Emil Rigo) or people who had been prejudiced against Novotny for nationalist reasons (such as Vasil Bilak and later Gustav Husák). The failure of Moscow in August to rely on these people may be explained by the fact that they were neither united, as the Natolin group had been in Poland in 1956, nor, certainly, as courageous and forceful as Brezhnev

would have liked them to be. For example, the Soviet Politburo expected them to come forward at a meeting in Cierna against Dubcek and his liberal comrades. Their behavior was undoubtedly influenced by the population's unanimous support of Dubcek and awareness that the Soviet leadership itself was still largely undecided.

In July the decision not to go to Warsaw was not opposed in the party politburo (called presidency), and even Bilak is reported to have been rather lukewarm [shy] in Cierna in supporting the Warsaw letter. Indra, a party secretary without politburo status, was considered the most reliable by the Russians, who proposed to Svoboda on August 21 that Indra form a new government. A few weeks before, nevertheless, he had supervised and had not objected to the new party statute published on August 10, which deviated greatly from the Soviet model and authorized the expression of "minority opinions."

As mentioned, the weakness of the pro-Soviet group was apparent in the politburo meeting of August 20, when the resolution condemning the invasion was supported by only three members out of eleven: Vasil Bilak, Drahomir Kolder, and Oldrich Svestka. Three other members who were expected by the Russians to join the group--Frantisek Barbirek, Jan Piller, and Emil Kigo--defected, removing any prospect of changing the leadership and creating a political framework for the Soviet action.

On August 21, some fifty members of the central committee, most of them with conservative leanings, met in a Prague hotel to discuss the situation. Curiously enough, the Russians were aware of this meeting and sent some officers to attend but no political representatives able to offer guidance or simply to raise the morale of their friends. No decision was made, and a day later the more active liberal wing of the party

organized a party congress, selected a new central committee, and took the lead in the resistance to the invaders.

Other pro-Soviet "collaborators" had been informed of the intervention in advance and were to play a technical role of support, but they were too isolated to be efficient. Viliam Salgovic, a vice minister of the interior, was the main Soviet agent in the police apparatus. He tried to organize his friends and even made some temporary arrests (notably that of Cestmir Cisar, a party secretary), but his forces were clearly insufficient to counter the moves of Interior Minister Josef Pavel, who had turned the police in favor of Dubcek. Miroslav Sulek, a former director of the press agency CTK, returned to his office on the night of August 20 and pretended to control all the news dispatches, but the workers did not obey his orders. Karel Hoffmann, head of Prague's communication center, succeeded in cutting off all radio stations for a few hours that night, which is why the politburo appeal against the Russian intervention could not be broadcast until 4:30 a.m. All those people were later rehabilitated and given new positions, but in the days and weeks following the intervention their fate was exactly the opposite of what they had hoped for and what the intervention was supposed to achieve--instead of assuming positions of leadership, they had to hide from popular anger.

The second group, liberal radicals (they may be called so in the Czechoslovak context, though they would not have seemed radical in a Western system), were people actively dedicated to the reformist program of Dubcek and generally eager to push it more strongly. Soviet leaders hated them most, but this hostility led them to burn their bridges and pushed them further along the liberal line. Frantisek Kriegel, for example, a politburo member in charge of the National Front (a coalition of the

Communist party with smaller parties whose task was to promote candidates for parliamentary elections), is not reported to have been responsible for specific anti-Soviet actions, but he was perceived by Moscow for reasons that remain unclear (one of them reportedly being that he was a Jew) as the archenemy. Jiri Hajek, the foreign minister, though he was a moderate liberal, fell into the same category because he defended the Czechoslovak cause at the UN Security Council after the invasion--a move that was stopped by Svoboda at Brezhnev's request. Josef Spacek, a politburo member, was actually a more dangerous liberal, being the man behind the cessation of press censorship. He was one of the first to be sacked during the Husak normalization, as were the writers, journalists, and economic reformers, notably Ota Sik, who had been at the forefront of the liberals during the spring. But ahead of them was Josef Pavel, the minister of the interior, a Communist jailed in Stalin's time, who had later purged the police apparatus of Soviet agents; according to Tigrid, some 150 of them had been diverted into secondary jobs, and the many Soviet "tourists" who came to Czechoslovakia in July 1968 for intelligence gathering and subversion were watched. That is why the Moscow protocol of August 26 specified that "the activities of the Ministry of the Interior will also be examined fully. Appropriate measures will then be taken to strengthen the direction of this ministry." Not until five days later did Svoboda ask Pavel to resign "for the good of us all." 73/

Those liberal radicals were not at the top level and could not put up an armed fight, but they did their best to organize resistance of a different type. The journalists were responsible for the highly effective system of radio communications that was maintained for weeks after the invasion. No details of how it functioned have been reported, but it seems to have used

about fifteen local stations, coordinating their actions and switching from one to another every fifteen minutes to escape detection. The necessary technical equipment may have come from the army or the Svazarm, an organization for youth military training, which disposed of some 2,000 transmitters. The workers' militia, a paramilitary formation, had similar equipment and probably contributed too, though its leaders were supposed, at the end of the Novotny period, to support the conservatives. But some Communist organizations aimed at promoting orthodox ideology among the population may turn in an opposite direction in time of crisis.

The third group was made up of the principal leaders who may be termed "centrist," not only because of their aversion to radical moves, but also because of the neutralizing effect of their different backgrounds and temperaments. Of the "big four," only Ludvik Svoboda and Josef Smrkovsky had had the harsh experience of demotion (Svoboda) or repression (Smrkovsky) in Stalin's and Novotny's time. The other two had had relatively quiet careers in the apparatus, Oldrich Cernik in the economy, Alexander Dubcek in Slovakia and also in Moscow, where he had studied at the Soviet High Party school for two years. Dubcek was not known as a liberal until the last months of 1967, when he seems to have sided prudently with the writers. This kind of alliance, as in Poland, is often a purely tactical move to increase the weight of one faction in the struggle for power.

Did Dubcek intend to move further forward? The only indication that he might have had a deliberate plan is given by Gomulka in his Nowiny Kurier account. The former Polish party chief relates that in the first days of February 1968 he had a secret meeting with Dubcek at the border between the two countries. He gives the following description of the talks: "He [Dubcek] proposed that we act jointly. He wanted me to support him, to introduce in Poland several freedom reforms which were more or less

radical, and that I would take the stand with him jointly with regard to the Soviet comrades. Dubcek told me at that time that if I took such a step, we would also be joined by Kadar, who made a similar proposal to him, and that the three of us would represent a considerable force. It would not be easy to swallow us." 74/ Gomulka adds that Dubcek even tried to exert pressure on him by saying that Gomulka's acceptance of this plan would be the best way "not to be caught unprepared by events" in Poland itself.

Such a plan was never mentioned anywhere except in this account. It is hard to believe that a man like Kadar would not only endorse it, but initiate it, or that Dubcek was looking so far ahead. Nothing in his subsequent behavior substantiates the charge. His main characteristics rather were goodwill and sympathy for the liberals combined with indecision and political naivete. He constantly tried to convince Brezhnev of his good intentions, and instead of saying no, he usually promised more than he could deliver. Gomulka certainly, and even Nagy, seem to have been stronger.

Ludvik Svoboda saw to it that the forms of legality were respected: his refusal to appoint Indra--or himself--head of the government, as the Russians proposed, added the final blow to the first phase of the intervention, but having achieved the liberation of the other three and consolidated his image as "father of the nation," the president stopped there. He had always been strongly pro-Soviet even during his disgrace (which was ended by Khrushchev's personal intervention); his decision to go to Moscow on August 23 was questionable, since it was a step on the road to compromise and actually helped the Soviet leaders out of their problems. Later, Svoboda was to go along with the Husak normalization line all the way to its final consequences.



Oldrich Cernik, Dubcek's prime minister, had to share the fate of the party chief, though he too bowed rather early to Soviet demands. He was notably active in negotiating, then in rallying support for, the treaty on the stationing of Soviet troops in October.

Josef Smrkovsky was probably the strongest character in this team of four and the most articulate in presenting liberal views. But the decision of the four to "stick together" in August made him a hostage to the advocates of compromise: he had to go along with them even if he had more reservations than the other three about the Moscow protocol. This did not prevent his later being dropped from this position with the tacit acquiescence of the other three. Personal interests may have played a part here, especially during the Moscow negotiations at the end of August. Had they refused to compromise, Dubcek and his colleagues knew they would be kept in detention and perhaps physically eliminated, as Nagy had been ten years earlier. On the other side, accepting the compromise meant a return to Prague and the resumption of their functions; they knew that this would happen in considerably worsened conditions but hoped to be able to lessen the Soviet pressure by promises, as they had done before.

Another weakness of this group was its failure to anticipate the intervention and prepare for it. A report by Stanislav Budin, editor in chief of the Prague weekly Reporter tells about a meeting some forty journalists had on August 17, three days before the invasion, with a group of leaders that included Cernik, Smrkovsky, and Kriegel. The question of a possible armed intervention was raised, says Budin, but "they [the leaders] answered that this was out of the question, that the reason for their fears was the possibility of a provocation that would oblige them to call on the police forces." 75/ In other words, the military maneuvers that were in

full swing along the Czechoslovak borders with Communist countries were perceived as a meaningless exercise (except for the exertion of political pressure, to which Prague leaders were so accustomed that they largely ignored it).

After the invasion, there was no question of armed resistance. In its first proclamation, the leadership called on the citizens "to maintain calm and not to offer resistance to the troops on the march. Our army, security corps and people's militia have not received a command to defend the country" (in a subsequent version, the following was added to the last sentence: "because defense of our state frontiers is now impossible"). 76/ Without questioning this decision (though many Czechoslovaks still think that fighting was necessary, if only for the honor of the country and its image for future generations), it must be pointed out that a more active nonviolent resistance would have been possible if the political leaders had shown stronger determination and preparedness.

For example, instead of waiting for the Russians in the central committee building, Dubcek, Smrkovsky, and their colleagues might have escaped to private hideouts, from which they could have continued to govern the country, as other ministers, like Pavel, did. One effective measure taken after a few days by the population at the suggestion of the clandestine radio stations was to change all road markers, so that Soviet convoys were disoriented and lost precious time. This might have been supplemented by the destruction or obstruction of selected targets, like bridges. Such measures before the invasion, as well as the erection of road blocks at the borders and on the airfields and a partial mobilization, could have been an effective deterrent, taking advantage of Moscow's hesitation.

To be sure, the Czechoslovak army was not reliable one way or the other. As in Hungary and Poland, the combination of pro-Soviet generals--and Soviet advisers too--at the top and a rank and file that sided with the people meant that neither faction could use it decisively. The military did nothing

to prevent the Soviet invasion or to oppose it after it began, especially since they were hampered in the latter effort by the Soviet forces that often surrounded their barracks to prevent any move out of them.

The role of General Martin Dzur, Czechoslovak defense minister, remains a mystery. All indications are that he loyally supported Dubcek through the spring and summer, though he avoided radical statements (unlike General Vaclav Prchlik, his assistant for political affairs, who stirred Russian anger by publicly calling for a change in the structure of the Warsaw Pact). But he seems to have sided with the Russians and the "normalizers" early in 1969 and played a major role in the final push against Dubcek. When Marshal Grechko, the Soviet defense minister, arrived in Milovice on March 31, 1969, he first talked to a group of pro-Soviet Czechoslovak generals who were awaiting him; these included Rytir, a friend of Novotny's, Dvorak, a deputy minister of defense, and Bedrich, the new head of the political directorate of the army. But it was Dzur who, after a meeting of the military council of the defense ministry, asked Dubcek to accept Grechko's ultimatum--namely, to take "radical and immediate measures" to restore order. His reward for this move was keeping his post in Husak's time.

Gustav Husak's case may be compared to Gomulka's in that he was falsely perceived by the liberals as their ally and betrayed their hopes. Like Gomulka, he did little to change this perception; indeed, he accepted it as long as it suited his purposes. He rose to power after the intervention, using the liberal trends, which were at their highest point at this time, and coming against some conservatives who had been labeled "collaborators"; notably against Vasil Bilak, from whom Husak took the job of party chief in Slovakia. But having achieved this, he started to turn against Dubcek and to take the lead against what he called "anti-socialist, liberalist and

anarchistic forces." By September he had managed to attract the attention of Soviet leaders; Vasily Kuznetsov, the Soviet envoy, told Smrkovsky on September 11, "Things are a bit better in Slovakia, thanks especially to comrade Husak, but even there we are not satisfied." 77/ After the December meeting in Moscow between the two leaderships, Husak moved exactly as the Russians had expected by leading the attack against Smrkovsky (under the pretext that a Slovak had to head the parliament).

The big difference was that Gomulka was in a better position to deal with the Kremlin since he had demonstrated his capacity to resist. Husak could consolidate his position only by total subservience to Moscow. He thus had to accept the return of a great number of Novotny's friends and, though himself a victim of repression, a return also of past practices and of their supporters. This was radically different from the situation of Kadar, who, being more skilled at inner party manipulation, managed to follow the middle of the road and to rely on his own group of supporters.

#### Reaction Abroad

Though Soviet action in this crisis avoided bloodshed, its repercussions on the Communist movement were greater than those from the intervention in Hungary twelve years earlier. Most Western European Communist parties, including the powerful Italian and French parties, condemned the Soviet Union. Among the socialist countries (except for Albania, which used this opportunity to officially renounce its membership in the Warsaw Pact, in which Tirana had not participated since breaking with Moscow in 1961), two must be singled out.

Yugoslavia was a vulnerable country, since the temptation to liquidate this permanent model of Communist dissidence might have been in Moscow. Tito reacted preemptively by stating on August 23 that his country would

defend its independence. This statement was reinforced by the recall of some army reservists. At the same time the Yugoslavs were careful to avoid using harsh words that might have provoked the Russians: the intervention in Czechoslovakia was not "condemned but met with "anxiety" and "concern."

Rumania was in by far the touchiest position. It had been rewarded for its cooperation with Moscow during the Hungarian crisis by a withdrawal of Soviet troops in 1958. But since 1964, it had developed an independent foreign policy, maintaining friendly relations with China at a time when Chinese insults to the Soviet Union were provocative, refusing to break with Israel after the Six-Day War, and developing contacts with Western nations. Though by no means a liberal, Nicolae Ceausescu, the leader in Bucharest after Gheorghiu-Dej's death in 1965, had viewed the Czechoslovak experiment with great hope: visiting Prague in early August, he had even hinted at a possible renewal of the prewar "petite entente" between Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and Rumania to resist Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe. This was an embarrassment to Dubcek and a new reason for Ceausescu to fear Soviet intentions in the aftermath of August 20.

There are strong indications that Moscow was ready in the summer of 1968 to take action against Rumania, and Ceausescu, too. Major troop movements were reported along the Rumanian borders with the Soviet Union and Hungary, not all of them attributable to the preparation for Soviet action in Czechoslovakia. Ion Gheorghe Maurer, the Rumanian prime minister, told me a few months later that twenty-nine divisions were concentrated in August 1968 against Rumania, in addition to the twenty-nine in Czechoslovakia.

This explains why the first Rumanian reaction to the August 20 action was forceful and strident. Ceausescu hastily convened a huge meeting in

downtown Bucharest on August 21 and no less hastily formed "armed patriotic detachments of workers, peasants and intellectuals" to parade in the city. Denouncing Soviet action in Prague as a "great mistake" and "a grave danger to peace in Europe," he added: "Maybe tomorrow there will be some who say that here too, at this rally, counterrevolutionary tendencies were manifest. We answer all of them: the entire Rumanian people will not allow anybody to violate the territory of our homeland." 78/ This tone was maintained for several days, until more ominous signals came from Moscow. On August 23, 1968, the Soviet press agency Tass departed from its rule not to criticize Rumania by name by stating in a commentary on "imperialist" arguments: "It is strange, to say the least, to hear exactly the same formulations from the lips of Rumanian or Yugoslav leaders. Don't they know that the Warsaw Pact was concluded not only for the purpose of defending national borders and territories of the states signing it?" This warning sounded particularly threatening to Rumania, a signatory of the Warsaw Pact. In the same period, direct criticism of Rumania appeared also in Hungarian, Polish, and other Communist press organs.

Some accommodation seems to have taken place at a meeting in Bucharest on August 25 between Ceausescu and Soviet Ambassador A. V. Basov--at least, the Rumanian leader toned down his attacks on Moscow. He stated the following day in a speech in Brasov: "We are determined to act with all our force and skill so as to contribute to a speedy liquidation of the present state of affairs" (in the relations among Communist parties). The same day, August 26, the Rumanian party organ Scinteia declared: "The relations should not be aggravated still more." Izvestiya answered with another direct criticism of Rumania, though a less threatening one: Bucharest was taken to task for not having given "a proper and immediate rebuff" to

the rumors that Rumania was going to be invaded by Warsaw Pact countries. 79/

Although tension subsided somewhat, the danger was not completely over.

In the last days of August, new movements of troops were reported near Rumania; according to Western estimates, fourteen divisions were concentrated around the country: nine in the USSR, two in Bulgaria, and three in Hungary. 80/ More ominous signals were received by American authorities, moving President Johnson to add to a speech he delivered in San Antonio on August 31, a strong warning to Moscow. After referring to the Czechoslovak invasion, he said: "There are even rumors late this evening that this action might be repeated elsewhere in the days ahead in Eastern Europe. So I say to you tonight and to the world, we cannot and we must not in the year 1968 return to a world of unbridled aggression . . . . So let no one unleash the dogs of war." 81/

Even now, Soviet intentions toward Rumania at that time are not clear. There is no doubt that the temptation to take violent action existed. Maybe President Johnson's warning was helpful in preventing it--the Rumanians were very grateful to him, at least--but another factor may have contributed to the Soviet "nondecision": the situation in Czechoslovakia, where the upsurge of popular resistance and the Soviet failure to achieve a tangible political result made it necessary to concentrate on the problems there, without adding the burden of another adventure.

By contrast, Soviet action in Czechoslovakia was not hampered in any way by Western reaction. Nothing was said in advance that might have made Moscow hesitate, and apparently even the possibility of a Soviet military intervention in Prague had been discarded by Washington policymakers after the Bratislava "compromise." A week before August 20, the State Department disbanded a special unit that had been set up to keep a close watch on the

Czechoslovak situation.<sup>82/</sup> Before August, the only concern in the West was to refute anything that might have substantiated Soviet accusations about Western involvement in the Czechoslovak situation or West German revanchist intrigues. NATO military exercises planned for the end of August in West Germany near the Czechoslovak border were moved at the end of July to another location near Ulm, further west.

After the invasion, there was no question in Washington of going beyond verbal protests and recourse (known in advance to be platonic) to the United Nations. Soviet action was described by President Johnson (on August 21 in a television address) as "shocking the conscience of the world," but as Secretary of State Dean Rusk put it in a speech in New Haven on September 12: "There was little we could do, through the use of military force, to assist any of those [Eastern European] countries without automatically engaging in general war with the Soviet Union."

Had this been said before the invasion to the Russians? At least one Czechoslovak leader, Zdenek Mlynar, has publicly stated that it had. According to an interview he gave the Western press after he left Czechoslovakia in 1978, Brezhnev told Dubcek in Moscow a few days after the invasion that he had received a formal assurance from President Johnson that the United States would not react militarily to an intervention in Czechoslovakia." More specifically, he had asked Johnson if the United States still recognized the validity of the Yalta and Potsdam agreements and had received a positive answer. <sup>83/</sup> This does not mean that the American view was expressed to the Soviet leaders so bluntly, but it is fair to assume that it was substantially the same.

Though it was admitted that the presence of Soviet forces in Czechoslovakia had "obviously affected the military situation in Europe"



(as the State Department spokesman acknowledge on August 31), there was no change in the plan for withdrawing 33,000 American soldiers from Europe, which had been 75 percent accomplished at the time of the invasion. The idea of a NATO summit meeting, put forward by Zbigniew Brzezinski, then an adviser to presidential candidate Hubert Humphrey, and by West German Chancellor Kurt Georg Kiesinger, was quickly abandoned. By contrast, President Johnson was somewhat reluctant to drop the plan for a meeting with Soviet leader Brezhnev. Both men were near agreement on announcing the opening of the strategic arms limitation talks. Because of the Czechoslovak invasion, the announcement and the start of the talks were postponed until 1969.

#### Outcomes and Conclusions

In all three cases under study, the Soviet Union achieved its objectives, though this was not always clear at the time.

In Poland in 1956, the Russians were certainly right not to intervene. Any use of force by them would have provoked a violent reaction from the Polish people and their leaders and would have pushed Gomulka into the anti-Soviet camp, perhaps with a result similar to that in Hungary with Nagy. In fact Soviet leaders made mistakes in both cases, trusting Nagy more than he deserved (from their point of view) and unduly antagonizing Gomulka, who turned out to be their best ally in Poland, the leader most able to bring this liberal and nationalistic nation back into a system acceptable to Moscow. The purge early in 1957 of the liberal official party daily Trybuna Ludu, the banning of the ultra-liberal weekly Po Prostu (summer and fall 1957), and the return to their official functions

( in 1959 of hard-liners and even members of the Natolin group (Eugeniusz Szyr, Tadeusz Gede, and Kazimierz Witaszewski) were the main steps along this path.

Gomulka might have used his victory of 1956 at least to develop an independent foreign policy, as Rumania did after 1963-64. This did not happen, mainly because of Gomulka's own inclination toward pro-Soviet "solidarity," but also because of anti-German feeling, traditional in the Polish elite, and uncertainty about the country's western border. The only exception was the policy toward China, where Gomulka kept some distance between himself and Moscow, refraining from attacking Peking too harshly. But the climax of the "dogmatic" line came in 1968, when ironically, Gomulka pressed forcefully for an armed intervention against Dubcek, and in 1970, when he unsuccessfully asked the Russians to help put down the riots of Polish workers in the Baltic ports. His downfall followed quickly in December 1970.

In Hungary, the Soviet intervention of November 4, 1956, was probably the only means the Kremlin had at its disposal to bring back an acceptable regime and to keep the country among its satellites. Kadar was doubtless reluctant to assume the leadership in those conditions, but he managed, at the price of a tightly controlled pro-Soviet foreign policy, to make the domestic regime more flexible and amenable to the population. Beginning in 1960 with amnesty for many political prisoners, followed in 1961 by the proclamation of the Kadar principle (unique in Communist systems)-- "Those who are not against us are with us"--this process brought about in 1964 a semiopening of the Hungarian borders in both directions, a higher degree of intellectual freedom than in other Communist countries, and

an economic situation improved by a more flexible system of management.

This result may be attributed to the following factors:

1. The personality of Kadar, who had been the victim of the worst repression under Rakosi and who was genuinely willing to get rid of the Stalinist past--more so than Gomulka, who tended to see the "Polish October" as little more than an episode in the struggle for power between different factions of the apparatus.

2. Kadar's decision to rely exclusively on his own constituency of middle-of-the-road Communists, keeping the dogmatists out of the way as strictly as the revisionists.

3. A broad consensus of the population, which realized that, given the circumstances and the unavoidable Russian domination, Kadar was the best alternative Hungary had.

4. The fact that Kadar had to deal in Moscow with Khrushchev, a man deeply involved in a fight against Stalinist and conservative elements and more likely to support his own brand of revisionism in Hungary. If Brezhnev and his comrades had been in charge in the Kremlin in the early 1960s, Kadar would have had a more difficult job. When they came to power, it was too late to impose a sudden turn, and Kadar managed to maintain at least the main elements of his line

In Czechoslovakia, the Soviet intervention achieved the desired result, but after a rather long delay and with a substantial degree of overkill, which reduced the benefits of the operation. The preservation of the Dubcek leadership and of the achievements of the Prague spring would undoubtedly have endangered Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe. But at the same time the armed intervention in Czechoslovakia proved a greater embarrassment to the Soviet Union internationally, particularly in the

Communist movement, than the action in Hungary twelve years earlier.

Furthermore, Husak's leadership, his inability to develop new ideas and a constituency of his own in the Communist party, prevented him from acting as Kadar had in Hungary or even as Gomulka had in Poland. The only road open to him led back to the Novotny era, to the Novotny people, and to the old methods. This created more frustration and a potentially unstable situation.

All three cases show that Soviet armed intervention, or the threat of it, is still an important fact of life in Eastern Europe. To be sure, it is not an easy or automatic option. Some leaders who asked for such an intervention to help them against their opponents--like Novotny in 1967--or to crush popular revolt--like Gomulka in 1970--were refused. After all, what matters for the Kremlin is not the fate of a particular leader (even that of an old and reliable friend), but the interests of the Soviet Union; that is, the preservation of a pro-Soviet policy and of an orthodox, Soviet-like socialism in the country concerned.

This being the case, Moscow will act without worrying about legality or diplomatic considerations. An official pretext, such as an appeal for help from at least some of the local leaders (like that of Kadar in 1956) is desirable, but is not considered necessary. The Czechoslovak leaders who supposedly asked Moscow for help were never clearly identified. The so-called Brezhnev doctrine, implying that international law does not apply to relations between Communist countries, was developed for this occasion. But the Hungarian intervention was carried out with even less explanation. In Poland, on the other hand, there was no intervention, though the presence of the Natolinists and their overt desire for Soviet help offered a much better pretext for it. In the future, there is no

doubt that in an emergency or if it suited their interests, the Russians would invade another Communist country with even less "legitimation."

When an intervention is decided upon, it is carried out with overwhelming forces, all the way to a complete victory. In Czechoslovakia as well as in Hungary, the Soviet command managed to concentrate enough means to crush any resistance even when, as in the first case, the probability of such resistance was slight. By the same token, it may be assumed that an armed intervention against Gomulka in 1956, though a political mistake, would probably have led nevertheless, after a violent war and a long repression, to a normalized Natolinist regime, somewhere in between the types headed by Husak and Kadar. Moscow would not have stopped its action short of such an outcome.

The only exception to this typical behavior is the first armed intervention in Budapest on October 24, 1956, which was carried out with limited means and without a clear political objective. Moscow was then reluctant to support Gero. It never repeated this kind of half-hearted action.

The deterrent effect of a Soviet threat before an actual intervention is limited, however. To be sure, the presence of Soviet forces in most Eastern European countries usually keeps intraparty struggles among local leaders from escalating into acute political crises. The leaders know from past examples that they cannot contend for power--or maintain it if they are already in command--without Moscow's backing. The more or less quiet elimination of Walter Ulbricht in East Germany and of Gomulka in Poland in 1970 and the fading away of the Moczar group in Poland in the early 1970s have no other cause.

If, however, intraparty struggle does escalate into an open crisis, especially if public opinion actively favors one faction, Soviet diplomatic and military pressure short of an actual intervention seems to have little effect. Soviet military movements did not prevent the Poles from designating Gomulka as their leader in 1956. They had little, if any, effect on Nagy in Hungary and Dubcek in Czechoslovakia before November 4, 1956, and August 20, 1968, respectively. One can see a sort of counterproductive cycle, in which the more Moscow applies pressure for an orthodox Communist leadership and a pro-Soviet climate in the target country, the stronger is the anti-Soviet mood of the population of the country, which pushes leaders toward nationalism and resistance. In Hungary Soviet reinforcements and movements of troops in late October 1956 led Imre Nagy to withdraw from the Warsaw Pact. In Czechoslovakia Soviet military preparation and maneuvers were so constant that Dubcek failed to get the signal. Any new military move was perceived as another political pressure, not as a real danger.

Western reaction in all three cases did not present Moscow with problems. On the military side, there was nothing Western powers could reasonably do to prevent the Soviet Union from acting at will in areas that have clearly been in its sphere of influence since the late 1940s. This was true in Poland, a country surrounded by Communist countries, in Hungary, a neighbor of neutral Austria, and even in Czechoslovakia, the only country under study in which there were no Soviet troops and which shared a border with a NATO member.

The action in Czechoslovakia nevertheless clearly improved the East-West balance of power in favor of Moscow. It added five Soviet divisions to the twenty-six already stationed in Eastern Europe and,

more important, it permitted a territorial connection between the forces in East Germany and Poland--the Northern Group of Troops--and the forces in Hungary--the Southern Group. This new contingent, which naturally took the name "Central Group," gave the Russians direct control of an area in the heart of Europe that would be vital in a conflict. After the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Austria (1955) and Rumania (1958), it was the first move in the opposite direction, to the west. This change, coinciding with the first Soviet step toward nuclear parity with the United States (the number of ICBMs was equalized in 1969) and with the beginning of a major buildup of Soviet conventional forces, substantially reinforced the Soviet military posture in Europe.

Moscow, however, had a political price to pay after each intervention. One consequence of the Hungarian operation was a return to the post-Stalin status of East-West tension, a cancellation of the relative detente introduced by the 1955 Geneva summit and the Austrian peace treaty. It took three years to organize the first high-level meeting with the United States (at Camp David in 1959). After 1968 the picture was different. In the East the Czechoslovak intervention further exacerbated the Sino-Soviet split and opened the way for China's rapprochement with the United States. Nearly everywhere in the Communist ranks, Moscow suffered a new and probably decisive deterioration of its image; this and the appearance of Solzhenitzyn's books led to the so-called Eurocommunist deviation.

The Western governments, however, reacted more mildly. The detente process, started by France in 1966, continued nearly unimpaired after 1968, switching to Germany with the beginning of Chancellor Brandt's Ostpolitik, then to the United States with the Nixon-Brezhnev summits of the early 1970s. And before that, the way was opened for SALT and the Conference on

Security and Cooperation in Europe.

One lesson Soviet leaders may draw from those crises is that each use of force inside their sphere of influence should be considered by them on its own merits and risks, not in terms of East-West tension or detente. The desire for dialogue in the Western capitals will always be stronger than the desire to punish aggression against countries already dominated by the Kremlin.



Footnotes

1. Nowiny Kurier, April 16, 1973. This Polish-language weekly published in Tel Aviv presented in fourteen installments, from April 16 to July 13, 1973, what is described as a number of conversations held between Gomulka and an unidentified writer between March and July 1971, a few weeks after Gomulka was ousted from power. Despite the unauthenticated character of this document, there are strong reasons to believe that Gomulka actually used this means to give his own assessment of his long career, as Khrushchev did after his retirement.

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3. Nicholas Bethell, Gomulka: His Poland and His Communism (London: Penguin, 1972) p. 210.

4. Nowe Drogi (Warsaw), October 1956.

5. Philippe Ben, Le Monde (Paris), October 24, 1956.

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7. Philippe Ben, Le Monde, October 21 and 22, 1956.

8. Nowiny Kurier, April 16, 1973.

9. Le Monde, October 25, 1956.

10. New York Times, November 3, 1956.

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12. Ibid.

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19. New York Times, November 3, 1956.
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30. Tigrid, Why Dubcek Fell, p. 96.
31. Ibid., pp. 127-28.
32. Dix Ans Après, p. 109.
33. International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance, 1967-1968 (London: IISS, 1967), p. 5.
34. New York Times, August 23, 1968.
35. New York Times, August 22 and 26, 1968
36. Tigrid, Why Dubcek Fell, p. 107.
37. Ibid., p. 223.
38. Windsor and Roberts, Czechoslovakia 1968, p. 108.
39. Leo Heiman, "Soviet Invasion Weakness," Military Review, vol. 49 (August 1969), pp. 41-42.
40. Windsor and Roberts, Czechoslovakia 1968, p. 110.
41. Heiman, "Soviet Invasion Weakness".
42. Quoted in Hajek, Dix Ans Après, p. 131.
43. Quoted in Windsor and Roberts, Czechoslovakia 1968, p. 123.
44. Heiman, "Soviet Invasion Weakness "

45. Pravda, August 28, 1968. For an English text, see Windsor and Roberts, Czechoslovakia 1968, pp. 178-81.
46. Tigris, Why Dubcek Fell, p. 210.
47. Ibid., p. 128.
48. An English text of the treaty is given in Windsor and Roberts Czechoslovakia 1968, pp. 193-200.
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50. New York Times, December 2, 1968.
51. Tigris, Why Dubcek Fell, p. 160.
52. International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance, 1969-1970 (London: IISS, 1969), p. 7.
53. Tigris, Why Dubcek Fell, p. 151.
54. Ibid., p. 152.
55. Bethell, Gomulka, p. 212.
56. Gibney, Frozen Revolution, p. 13.
57. Bethell, Gomulka, p. 211.
58. Nowiny Kurier, April 16, 1973.
59. Bethell, Gomulka, p. 216.

60. Ibid., p. 218.
61. Molnar, Budapest 1956, p. 154.
62. Barber, Seven Days of Freedom, pp. 180, 223-24.
63. Ibid., p. 231.
64. Molnar, Budapest 1956, p. 162.
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66. Molnar, Budapest 1956, p. 182.
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## Chapter 7

### THE SINO-SOVIET BORDER CONFLICT

by Thomas W. Robinson

Since the border incidents of March 1969, the Soviet Union and China have been at loggerheads militarily, and the foreign policies of both, as well as that of the United States, have changed immensely. Indeed, the policies and interrelations of the three states underwent a major reorientation as a result of those incidents and of the subsequent military buildups on both sides of the Sino-Soviet border. It is unlikely, for instance, that the rapprochement between China and the United States would have advanced so far had the decline in Sino-Soviet relations not been hastened by the 1969 events. Moreover, the entire international system has been affected by Sino-Soviet-American policy changes, as the fear-induced acceleration away from each other of China and the Soviet Union helped give the system post-cold war "looseness." This has meant that many states have felt no obligation to line up with either the Eastern or the Western bloc or with the Chinese.

Border strife between Russia and China has also served as a catalyst to induce the steady buildup of Soviet military strength, in every department, during the last decade. Far from causing the Soviet Union to shift its energies and attention away from the European

theater and strategic nuclear competition with the United States, the border incidents reinforced the Kremlin's determination to protect itself militarily on all fronts. Moscow did not want to be forced to choose among further investments in its traditional Western front, in its strategic competition with the United States, and in its new Chinese front. Finding itself with increasing military productive capacity and the ability to control the consumer demands of the still relatively docile Soviet citizenry, the Kremlin leadership elected to greatly increase its military investment on the Chinese front while not in the least deviating from the steady European and strategic buildup. It was this decision, taken directly (though not solely) as a result of the worsening military situation with China that began a serious arms race with the Chinese, led to the exacerbation by the mid-1970s of Soviet-American tension in many areas, and brought about significant changes in the relations of the three major powers and in Asian regional politics.

This is not to say, of course, that one event--the border clashes of March 1969--or the reaction to this event of the Russians or the Chinese was the sole cause of all the developments that followed. But it does appear to have been the final link in a long series of occurrences that persuaded policymakers in Moscow to take major corrective steps in a number of disparate spheres. Given the



importance of these changes, it is desirable to understand how Moscow used its armed forces against Peking during and after 1969 and how the buildup of Soviet military capabilities was caused by--and in turn affected--the decision to confront China. 1/

#### The Sino-Soviet Border Before 1969

Sino-Soviet border differences have a long history, stretching back to the signing of the first treaties between Russia and China in the seventeenth century. 2/ In the post-1949 period of Communist rule in China, however, the border was not a problem for the two governments until after the Soviet and Chinese Communist parties had their initial falling-out in the late 1950s. Thus the border issue was not one of the underlying causes of Moscow-Peking difficulties. 3/ Nevertheless, the border was always potentially a place where Sino-Soviet differences could be expressed, and this did occur, for example, during the Cultural Revolution. Probably there was always constant, if low-level, border tension that stemmed from the differences in the two peoples, in the locations of the Russian and Chinese population and industry, in the levels of modernization on the two sides of the border, and in geography. These could be made use of--or were themselves potential for trouble--once the two erstwhile allies parted company.

There were also specific border-related problems that fed the general level of tension: differences (put aside until 1964) over the exact location of the border and ownership of certain pieces of real estate, especially of islands in the Amur-Ussuri river system;

issue over the historic process of arriving at the treaties defining the border (for instance, Peking's unequal treaties argument); differences over treaty implementation; and problems of administering the border area, including river navigation questions and the special problem of island ownership and riparian rights in the Khabarovsk area. 4/ All of these issues were purposely forgotten or were easily managed by the two sides until the Sino-Soviet ideological split cracked the broader Moscow-Peking military alliance irreparably. Then, all these residual problems gradually reemerged and soon became active components of serious Sino-Soviet differences. Adding the military dimension, starting in about 1966, led to an increasing concentration on the border problem. That problem, the product of the ideological turmoil of the previous decade, finally became a cause in its own right of further Sino-Soviet tension. It was only a matter of time until things took a violent turn and brought out all the hitherto dormant racial, historical, and irrationally emotional fears in both capitals that have been so evident since 1969.

#### Border Incidents

Border incidents occurred with increasing frequency, beginning in 1959 or 1960. The Russians allege that the number of Chinese "systematic provocations" began to increase in June 1962. By 1967 border relations had become quite bad. Not only were there reports

of a clash on the Ussuri in January 1967, but the Soviet Union accused the Chinese of wildly provocative behavior during the Cultural Revolution. Other incidents occurred on December 7-9 and 23, 1967, and in late January 1968 along the Amur and the Ussuri, 5/ apparently continuing until the March 2, 1969, clash. The Russians gradually evolved a procedure for dealing with them without violence, a procedure that was in effect at Damansky Island in March 1969.

Chinese complaints about Soviet border violations began only with an "intrusion" on January 23, 1967, at Damansky Island. Between that date and March 2, 1969, the Chinese claim, Soviet troops intruded onto Damansky sixteen times (including eight occasions during January and February 1969), eighteen times onto Chili Ching Island (north of Damansky), and on "many occasions" onto Kapotzu Island (south of Damansky), using "helicopters, armored cars, and vehicles." The Chinese accused the Russians of "ramming Chinese fishing boats, robbing Chinese fishing nets, turning high-pressure hoses on Chinese fishermen . . . kidnapping Chinese fishermen," assaulting and wounding Chinese frontier guards and seizing arms and ammunition, and violating Chinese air space by overflights. Further, the Chinese charged, the Soviet Union sent tanks, armored cars, and boats into Chinese territory, "drove out many Chinese inhabitants by force, demolished their houses and destroyed their means of

production and household goods." Finally, the Chinese charged that the Russians "provoked" a total of 4,189 border incidents from October 15, 1964, when border negotiations broke down, to March 1969. 6/ These referred to border reconnaissance by the USSR and to evicting Chinese from areas it considered Russian without taking lives. Soviet and Chinese charges, taken together, indicate little more than run-of-the-mill incidents between two unfriendly powers who disagree about some specifics of border demarcation and who find the border a convenient region to express the general tension. But each took the other's activities more seriously as time went by. Tit-for-tat reprisals began after the January (1967) Revolution phase of the Cultural Revolution and lasted until early 1969.

#### Military Dispositions and the Beginning of the Soviet Buildup

The "traditional" (long-term) disposition of forces along the border had roughly balanced numbers of men--the Chinese having an edge in the areas around Manchuria and the Russians having an edge in the Sinkiang area--and a Soviet superiority in weapons and logistics. During the decade of relative Sino-Soviet friendship that ended in 1959, the Chinese neither worried about this overall disparity nor were they in a position to challenge it, and the USSR never made much of it. In the early 1960s, when Sino-Soviet ideological separation came, force dispositions on both sides remained defensively

oriented. The Soviet Union directed most of its attention to Western Europe and the United States and its military investment to the strategic arms race; China after 1960 renewed its faith in guerilla tactics and defense in depth. The latter stationed about fourteen infantry divisions in the north-east (e.g., Manchuria), five divisions in Inner Mongolia, and five more in Sinkiang. The last two areas also had two to three division-equivalents of border guards, other nondivisional support elements, and the well-known Production and Construction Corps, paramilitary units made up of military-age youths in Sinkiang and Inner Mongolia. This gave the Chinese a total of thirty-five to forty division-equivalents in the military districts along the border, or somewhere between 420,000 and 450,000 men. 7/

Such dispositions of troops was determined both by Chinese security needs and the availability of soldiers. The sizable defensive force was located in the north-east because Peking was in one of the military regions included in the northeast sector, the area was very populous, Manchuria was China's major industrial base, and the Korean situation was unsettled. For defense specifically against the Soviet Union, fourteen divisions in the Shenyang Military Region, backed up by forces in the Peking Military Region, allowed the Chinese strategic flexibility. The large troop concentrations in these regions necessarily limited the numbers of men available to

serve in other locations. Hence the smaller forces in Mongolia and Sinkiang. In Mongolia this presented no problem, since with no Soviet presence Mongolia was no threat to China. Sinkiang, on the other hand, required some military presence, since it housed nuclear test facilities, strategic resources, and a not too friendly minority population with a history of rebellion. Fortunately, the topography--desert and mountains--allowed the more effective placement of the necessarily smaller numbers of troops.

As for the USSR, European Russia was where most of the Russian population lived and where Soviet international political involvement had been traditionally directed. A weak, friendly, or neutral China (or, for most of the 1930s and 1940s, a neutral Japan) encouraged the Russians to maintain only a thin line of regular Red Army divisions east of Lake Baikal (except during the period of Soviet-Japanese tension in 1937 and the buildup immediately before the Soviet invasion of Manchuria in 1945). 8/ Until 1969 that meant only fifteen to seventeen regular divisions (of which ten were in a state of high combat readiness) supplemented with contingents of nondivisional forces and border guards. This gave the Chinese a substantial edge in numbers, since the Russians numbered only about 250,000 to 300,000 men, or twenty to twenty-four division-equivalents.

But the Soviet logistical picture was more favorable than that of the Chinese, despite long lines of communication. The Trans-Siberian Railway paralleled the Soviet-Chinese border for its entire

length. Except in the northeast, the Chinese had no comparable rail line. There were major Soviet military and air bases in the area and sizable Soviet cities along the length of the railroad. Again, the converse was true in China. Further, the Russians had far better equipment than the Chinese--aircraft, tanks, artillery, armored cars, and personnel carriers--and their comparatively good surface and air mobility meant that they could bring large forces to bear at a given spot much more quickly than the Chinese, who moved largely on foot. So the Russians balanced Chinese numbers with Soviet equipment and speed. Finally, in the event of conflict, the Soviet Union could have brought substantial reinforcements from European, central, and southern Russia, and its mobilization potential for fully-equipped and trained soldiers was probably greater than that of the Chinese.

Since the border incidents began in 1959 and annually increased in number until 1969, both powers might have been expected to augment their border forces in proportion to the frequency, location, and severity of those incidents. But no large buildup occurred before 1967 on either side, nor were traditional force dispositions altered. But beginning in late 1965, the Soviet forces-in-being were brought to a higher state of readiness, equipped with better, and more, weaponry, and their numbers augmented, if only marginally. The Russians also began equipping their Far Eastern forces with missiles, including surface-to-surface nuclear-tipped rockets, and several divisions in

Central Asia were earmarked for eventual duty east of Lake Baikal. Soviet media began to emphasize para-military training for citizens in border regions. Finally, the Soviet Union signed a new defense agreement with Mongolia which gave it the right to station troops and maintain bases in that country. 9/

On the Chinese side, nothing of a similar scale was done. The Chinese were in the throes of debating what sort of military strategy to pursue toward the American intervention in Vietnam. Moreover, the power struggle preceding the Cultural Revolution had resulted in purges in the army, notably of Chief-of-Staff Lo Jui-chi'ing, and had weakened the army despite Lin Piao's efforts to enhance Chinese military prowess through learning Mao Tse-tung's thought. It is true that by 1965 the Chinese were capable of producing most armaments (excluding high performance aircraft and sophisticated communications equipment) in sufficient quantity to supply the regular forces of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), a capability that prevented a major decline in Chinese military efficiency. But the Vietnam War directed Chinese military attention primarily to its southern flank, instead of its northern and western ones. The Chinese were thus able to counter the Soviet buildup only marginally.

The year 1967 was one of Soviet decision. Border incidents associated with the Cultural Revolution not only reached a new high but took on, in Soviet eyes, increasingly ominous overtones. They responded with a 20,000-man increase in the size of the border guard force, large enough to elicit a public complaint from Chinese Foreign



Minister Ch'en Yi. Moreover, the Soviet Union launched a campaign to explain Sino-Soviet differences to its people and sent high-level military figures on inspection tours of Far Eastern troop contingents. The major aspect of the Soviet buildup, however, was the decision to station strong military units on Mongolian soil, a deployment begun sometime after the signing of the twenty-year defense pact in January 1966 and shifted into high gear in 1967. By November 1967 several divisions, armed with tanks and missiles, were occupying permanent bases in Mongolia.

In the summer of 1968 the Russians held their first large maneuvers in Mongolia and completed a rail line between Chita, a major Soviet military base, and Choibalsan, Mongolia's second largest city, where a new Soviet base was established. Soviet strength inside Mongolia was estimated at six divisions, including one tank division. The magnitude of this buildup upset the balance of power between the two states' forces. The Chinese did their best to redeploy their own forces in response. After the Soviet-Mongolian maneuvers, several Chinese divisions were redeployed to the Soviet-Mongolian border and significant numbers of artillery pieces were redeployed from the Fukien region. Finally, with the Cultural Revolution drawing to a close, the Chinese began again to stress the importance of the Production and Construction Corps. In all, the Chinese increased their capability in the Northeast and in Inner Mongolia by four or five

divisions, making the total forty in both areas, as against the thirty-five or thirty-six divisions in the traditional orientation. The Chinese also tightened their border security in response to similar Soviet moves. 10/

Four conclusions emerge from this analysis of comparative border strengths before 1969. First, for long periods a rough balance of forces existed in the military regions on the Sino-Soviet border, trading Chinese numerical superiority for Soviet equipment and mobility advantages, and balancing Chinese troop concentrations in Manchuria with Soviet defense bases along the Amur and in Central Asia. Second, the balance changed around 1965, when the Soviet Union began to improve the quality and, to some extent, the quantity of its forces. Third, the balance seems to have been definitely upset by the movement after 1966 of Soviet troops and equipment into Mongolia and close to the Sino-Mongolian border. Soviet maneuvers in particular caused the Chinese to transfer additional, though still marginal, troops and equipment to Inner Mongolia and Manchuria. Last, increased patrolling by both sides and the exigencies of the Cultural Revolution caused rising tension all along the border. Although by early 1969 the impending end of the Cultural Revolution promised to subtract a disruptive and potentially dangerous element, the Soviet buildup more than offset that possibility and probably made the Chinese fear the future.

The March 1969 Military Clashes on the Ussuri<sup>1/</sup>

The many incidents along the border after early 1969 may be divided into the very small--but important--group whose immediate cause probably can be traced to Chinese military initiatives and the much larger group that available evidence indicates were due to Soviet action. There are little data on most of those incidents after the first two in March 1969, which is unfortunate, since there is a fundamental difference between those two and most of the subsequent occurrences. Whereas the March 2 incident seems, on balance, to have been perpetrated by the Chinese and the March 15 incident by the Soviet army to punish the Chinese for the earlier "transgression," almost all subsequent actions were Soviet-initiated activities designed to support concurrent diplomatic initiatives, to test Chinese military reaction, or to pin the Chinese back during the period of Soviet military buildup. These later incidents have been relatively numerous and show the character of deliberate Soviet use of force. Yet since the data necessary to draw firm conclusions about the nature of those incidents is lacking, I shall concentrate on only the first two Sino-Soviet clashes, presuming that they have enough in common with the rest to permit extrapolation. I will also examine the imbalance and the uneven pace of the respective Soviet and Chinese military buildups and related foreign policy activities to judge the wider effects of the Soviet use of force after March 1969.

On March 2 a skirmish took place at Damansky Island between Soviet and Chinese frontier formations. More than thirty Soviet border guards and an unknown number of Chinese soldiers were killed or wounded. Tension all along the border rose quickly and both armies increased their state of readiness. On March 15 at the same location there was a second, larger clash with greater loss of life. Whereas the first battle had lasted two hours, the second took nine hours. Both sides used heavy weapons. The Chinese reportedly lost several hundred men, the Russians an unspecified number. Sino-Soviet relations entered a new and dangerous stage. Incidents, if not actual military clashes, began to be reported all along the border and lasted until the famous September meeting at the Peking airport between Premiers Chou En-lai and Alexei Kosygin.

Damansky Island is in the Ussuri River, which forms the boundary between the Soviet Union and China, about 180 miles southwest of Khabarovsk. The Chinese claim the island was once a part of the Chinese bank, became separated by erosion of the river, and during low water in late summer can be reached on foot from the Chinese shore. The main channel of the Ussuri passes to the east of the island. The river at this point is wide and the river-arm (as the Chinese call it) or the channel (the Soviet term) appears to be nearly as wide, and may be as deep at high water, as the channel on the east. From the location of navigation markers on the

two shores and the curvature of the river, ships appear to traverse the eastern channel. The island itself is uninhabited, although Chinese fishermen used it for drying their nets and both nations have done some logging on it. About one mile in length and one-third mile wide, it is flooded during the spring thaw. The island is largely wooded, with some open areas, and rises to twenty feet above the water. There is extensive marshland on the Soviet side of the river, which in winter forces Russian vehicles to detour about two miles before they can move onto the ice toward the island. In March 1969 the river was frozen nearly solid, and multiton vehicles could be driven over the ice.

The characteristics of the immediate area are similar to those elsewhere on the Ussuri: boggy marshes along both sides, low elevation though slightly higher on the Chinese side, sparse population along the river front, and poor land for agriculture. The meager Soviet population is concentrated farther inland, along the Vladivostok-Khabarovsk sector of the Trans-Siberian Railway and the road that parallels it. Chinese settlements in this area of the river are even more sparsely populated. Most of the border incidents in the area before March 2 took place on two larger and more important islands, Kirkinsky and Buyan, situated to the north and south respectively. However, Damansky had previously been the scene of several near-violent meetings between groups of Soviet and Chinese frontier guards.

The Soviet Union maintained two border outposts in the area, one just south and the other just north of the island. The southern post had the disadvantage that its line of sight does not include the island itself (although the river-arm and the Chinese bank could be seen) and thus on-the-spot patrolling was necessary to determine Chinese presence on the island. The Chinese border post, named Kung-szu after the local Chinese settlement, was located on a hillock directly across from the island.

On the night of March 1-2, a mixed group of about three hundred Chinese frontier guards and regular soldiers dressed in white camouflage crossed the ice from the Chinese bank to Damansky Island, dug foxholes in a wooded area overlooking the southernmost extremity, laid telephone wire to the command post on the Chinese bank, and lay down for the night on straw mats. Sometime early in the morning, the duty man at the Soviet outpost south of the island reported activity on the Chinese bank. Around 11:00 a.m. a group of twenty or thirty armed Chinese were seen moving toward the island, shouting Maoist slogans as they went. The outpost commander, Strelnikov, and an undetermined number of his subordinates set off for the southern extremity of the island in two armored personnel carriers, a truck, and a command car. Arriving on the island (or perhaps remaining on the ice covering the river-arm west of the island) a few minutes later, Strelnikov and seven or eight others dismounted and moved out to warn the oncoming Chinese, as they had several times previously. Following

a procedure developed for such occasions, the Russians strapped their automatic rifles to their chests (reports differ: some say they left their weapons behind) and linked arms to prevent the Chinese from passing. A verbal altercation may have taken place at this point. In any case, the Chinese arrayed themselves in rows and appeared to be unarmed. But when the Chinese had advanced to about twenty feet from the Russian Group, the first row suddenly scattered to the side, exposing the second line of Chinese, who quickly pulled submachine guns from under their coats and opened fire on the Russians. Strelnikov and six of his companions were killed outright. Simultaneously, from an ambush to the Russians' right, the three hundred Chinese in foxholes also opened fire, catching the entire Russian unit by surprise. Mortar, machine gun, and antic tank gunfire also commenced at that moment from the Chinese side. The Chinese apparently then charged the Russians and hand-to-hand fighting ensued. The Soviet unit was overrun, and the Chinese (according to Soviet charges) took nineteen prisoners and killed them on the spot. They also carried away Soviet equipment, which they later put on display.

Seeing the battle, Senior Lieutenant Bubenin, head of the northern outpost, and nearly his entire command set out for the scene. Racing up in an armored car, he succeeded in gaining the right flank of the Chinese, forcing them to divide their fire. But he also found himself in the middle of the island in the ambush

that the Chinese had prepared for Strelnikov (who had not proceeded that far). Bubenin's vehicle was hit and disabled, and he himself was wounded and shell-shocked. He managed to get into another armored car and direct the battle from it. A series of melees ensued, with charges by both sides. Finally, the Russians state, they pinned down, for a time surrounded, and then forced the retreat to their own side of the bank of the remaining fifty or sixty Chinese. The Chinese took all their wounded with them, although they left behind some equipment. The entire battle lasted about two hours, and the Russians were so short-handed that civilians had to be pressed into service as ammunition bearers. Although both sides claimed victory, neither Russian nor Chinese forces remained permanently on the island after the battle, although the Soviets periodically moved off and on at will (later, they were reported to have abandoned it altogether to the Chinese).

The battle on March 15 was somewhat different. Preparations on both sides were much more complete, forces were larger, losses were higher, and the engagement lasted much longer. There was also no element of surprise. In contrast to the encounter on March 2, it is not clear who began the battle on the 15th. Soviet and Chinese sources differ, of course, and the Soviet documentation is again more voluminous. This time the Russian case is much less convincing, and the moral overtone present in reports of the earlier battle is muted, if not entirely absent. Both sides probably had built up their forces in the intervening fortnight, intending to wrest permanent



control of the island away from the other or, failing that, to deny the other side its unhindered use.

Apparently the Russians increased the frequency of their patrols of the island after March 2. They still did not station a permanent force on the island, however, lest the Chinese zero in on them with artillery and mortar. A small scouting party did spend the night of March 14-15 on the island, and it is possible that this group was used to lure the Chinese into a frontal attack. The Chinese say that the other side sent "many" tanks to the island and the river-arm ice about 4:00 a.m. on the 15th, attacking Chinese guards on patrol. It is not clear why such a large force would be needed to attack a patrol. The Russians state that their own early-morning patrol, consisting of two armored cars, discovered a group of Chinese lodged on the island, who had allegedly sneaked over the previous night. Whatever the cause, the battle began in earnest around 9:45 or 10:00 a.m., with mortar and artillery fire from the Chinese bank and, by 10:30, heavy fire from three points on the Chinese bank.

The Chinese now threw more than a regiment (around 2,000 men) into the fray, charging across the ice and gaining possession of at least part of the island. When they saw this wave of Chinese, the Russians sought to block their advance with fire from machine guns mounted on armored personnel carriers, but moved back, either off the island or to its eastern extremity, when they saw that the Chinese had a clear superiority in numbers. (Russian accounts speak

of a ratio of ten Chinese to every Russian.) The Chinese directed intense artillery fire not only at the Soviet troops but also at the eastern channel of the river separating the island from the Soviet bank, hoping to slow or stop the movement of heavy vehicles over the ice. The Russians, adopting tactics used by the Americans in the Korean War, allowed the Chinese to advance, and then counterattacked with large numbers of tanks, armored cars, and infantry in armored personnel carriers. Soviet artillery, brought in since the March 2 incident, launched a fierce barrage at 1:00 p.m., raking Chinese positions as far inland as four miles. Three such attacks were mounted, each breaking through the Chinese positions. The first two faltered when ammunition was gone. The third apparently broke up the Chinese position on the island, and the Chinese retreated to their own bank, taking their dead and wounded. The Russians state that they did not follow up the Chinese retreat with large-scale garrisoning of the island, although they continued intense patrolling. The battle was over at 7:00 p.m., having lasted more than nine hours. The Russians lost about sixty men (including the border post commander) and the Chinese eight-hundred, both figures probably including dead and wounded. The number of Soviet casualties was probably lower because the Russians had an advantage in tactics and armament, as well as having planned their movements in advance.

Soviet Strategy between March and September 1969

Beginning with the second Damansky incident, the Soviet Union put into practice a new strategy toward the Chinese. Summed up by the Western term "coercive diplomacy," the changed strategy sought to combine diplomatic and military pressure in an effort to make the Chinese see not only the desirability of settling the border problem itself, but also the possibility of using a border settlement as the basis for an all-round improvement in relations. It is true that there was an apparent contradiction in the two halves of this new policy. If by means of politico-military coercion the Soviet Union drove China first to the bargaining table and then to the signing of a new border treaty, the Chinese would probably not have been disposed to take the next step of improving or even discussing the improvement of relations in other areas. Nonetheless, the Soviet leaders did make up their minds to try to push the Chinese into renewed border talks as an important goal in itself, and evidently hoped that the Chinese would see the eventual wisdom of signing a new border treaty and at least talking about other outstanding issues. Coercion along the border thus had more than one purpose: on the one hand, an attempt to solve a particular and important problem in Soviet-Chinese interstate relations, and on the other, a means of "talking" to the Chinese about the desirability of resolving other ideological and national differences. Apparently the Russians determined that "success" on the border issue (border

talks leading to a negotiated treaty settlement or to a joint statement that the border issue was considered settled) was worth pursuing in its own right, even if it was achieved at a cost, in the short term, of lack of progress on other issues.

The Russians took another risk in employing coercive diplomacy. Their diplomatic moves were of necessity accompanied by punishing military actions at the border and by threats of more severe military actions to follow. And, they also felt it necessary to strengthen their forces along the entire length of the Soviet-Mongolian-Chinese border not merely to give support to the new politico-military campaign but, more important, to deter and defend against any repetition of the first Damansky incident. The Russians sought to control the local situation by absolute superiority in tactical conventional forces and the strategic situation by absolute superiority in combined forces, including nuclear arms. This means a huge buildup of forces against China in every category, which would dislocate the Soviet economy and push Peking toward the West. To preserve Soviet security in the narrow sense, then, Moscow took a chance that it could handle any long-term Chinese response and any shorter-term anti-Soviet realignment of political forces. In retrospect, that may seem not to have been a worthwhile gamble: border security was assured but at the cost of China's fear and hostility, its resolve to modernize

its economy and military to counter the Soviet Union directly, lack of the border treaty that was the secondary object, and the threat of an anti-Soviet entente composed of all the other powerful states in the world headed by the United States and China. 12/

To demonstrate to the Chinese their resolve on the border question, from April on the Russians not only brought up a large volume of military reinforcements--both troops and equipment---but also began to use the military superiority thus created to initiate (or take advantage of) "incidents" to serve as signals to the Chinese of the seriousness of the Russian intent. A series of such incidents, amounting to a campaign supported by hints of nuclear attack and other untoward consequences, occurred during the late spring and throughout the summer of 1969 and peaked in late August. Publicly admitted clashes took place on April 16, 17, and 25, May 2, 12-15, 20, 25, and 28, June 10-11, July 8 and 20, and August 13; and the two governments charged each other with having perpetrated dozens of other incidents. By September China had charged the Soviet Union with 488 "deliberate" violations of the frontier from June through August, and the Russians had accused the Chinese of 429 violations in June and July alone. 13/ Although the Chinese, unlike the Russians, did not provide details of their side of these stories--which under other circumstances would lead to the suspicion that Peking was the initiating side--Soviet accounts lacked the convincing degree of authenticity of their portrayals of the

two earlier episodes. The more interesting fact is that the publicized affairs took place in widely scattered locations along the border: some on the Ussuri River, scene of the March events, some on islands in the Amur River, some along the Sino-Mongolian border, and some in the Sinkiang-Kazakhstan region not far from the Chinese nuclear test site at Lop Nor and the historic Dzungarian Gates invasion route between the two countries.

Because the Chinese military were preoccupied with political and administrative matters associated with the Cultural Revolution, and the Soviet Union not only enjoyed strategic superiority, but also had hinted that it would take drastic measures if China did not cease its provocations and reconvene the border talks, it is difficult to image that it was the Chinese who took the military initiative. Although in some instances Chinese forces on the spot may have taken the offensive to forestall anticipated attack, it is doubtful in view of these relative weaknesses, that this was Chinese strategy in general. Rather, the period before September 11, 1969, when Chou and Kosygin met at the Peking airport, must be seen as a textbook case of the use by Moscow of combined political, military, and propaganda means to force Peking to take an action--renew the talks--it otherwise resisted and to teach it not to attempt more surprises like that at Damansky.

These Soviet military actions accompanied a series of diplomatic notes setting forth in detail the Soviet position on the

border problem and suggesting that all points of difference could be settled by agreeing upon a mutual and definitive border treaty. The Russians repeated the terms set forth in the abortive 1964 talks and parried each Chinese counterargument with historical or ideological points of their own, all the while coordinating diplomatic notes with military action. 14/

The most interesting and threatening aspect of the politico-military campaign was the Soviet hint of nuclear attack against China and its linkage in timing and publicity with a serious border incident in August and with the peak of Moscow's diplomatic campaign to bring the Chinese back to the negotiating table. The hint was conveyed indirectly by former Soviet news correspondent Victor Louis in the September 18 London Evening News but Western intelligence sources had known of it in mid-August. The Russians also let it be known that they had sounded out their Warsaw Pact allies on the possibility of a nuclear strike. It is doubtful whether the Soviet Union had any intention of actually carrying the threat, in view of the necessary magnitude of such a nuclear attack and its consequences for Moscow's relations with every other country, as well as the very high level of radiation-induced casualties that would have been suffered by all the other states of Northeast Asia downwind from the Chinese nuclear test facilities, missile deployment sites, and airfields.

But this carefully orchestrated mixture of threat, military

action, and diplomatic initiative did have its intended effect on the Chinese: in early September they agreed, apparently under extreme Soviet pressure, to allow Kosygin to meet Chou in Peking on September 11. (Kosygin had attempted to meet Chou at Ho Chi Minh's funeral in Hanoi, but Chou deliberately left for Peking before Kosygin was due to arrive. Kosygin therefore returned to the Soviet Union, but when he landed in Soviet Central Asia on his way back, he received word from Moscow that the Chinese had finally agreed to receive him and that he should change his plans and fly to Peking. 15/) Although no official announcement was made of what transpired at the Peking airport, semiauthoritative sources report that both sides agreed to cease armed provocations along the border; immediately resume border negotiations, suspended since 1964, at the deputy ministerial level; restore diplomatic relations up to the ambassadorial level; and step up trade and economic relations. Apparently Peking agreed to these "suggestions," despite Chinese efforts to wriggle out of a resumption of talks through counterproposals on September 18 and October 6. 16/ Border negotiations resumed in Peking on October 20.

Before going on to the post-September 1969 period, it is well to summarize Soviet and Chinese policies from March to September. The Russian strategy was two-pronged. Soviet diplomatic notes suggested restoring relations up to the ambassadorial level, increasing trade, opening talks on the resolution of ideological differences, and settling the border question through compromise. Resolution of



these questions would obviously constitute a qualitative improvement in Sino-Soviet relations. Soviet actions, on the other hand, were threatening: continual drubbings along the border, possibly striking Chinese nuclear facilities, and the hint of detaching border provinces (particularly Sinkiang) from the Chinese body politic and turning them into Mongolias. Perhaps the Russians were not serious about major military activities, but it is much more likely that they were following a strategy of parallel military and diplomatic escalation, postponing a choice between them until forced by events.

The Russians' strategy arose from their wish to avoid facing over the long run an increasingly powerful and unfriendly China in Asia while they were immersed in managing difficult problems in Eastern Europe and sustaining strategic and crisis-management competition with the United States throughout the world. It seemed best to attempt to address the "China problem" before it became unmanageable. Since the border question was of immediate strategic concern and was the only means of influencing the Chinese directly, it was decided to force this issue, at least to do whatever was necessary to bring the situation under Soviet control. The Russians hoped that proposals for improvement in relations would take some of the bitterness out of the pill the Chinese would have to swallow, provide the basis for longer-term (that is, post-Maoist) improvement in relations, supply a propaganda cover for military action taken and contemplated, and establish a fall-back position in case the

carrot-and-stick border strategy did not work.

Chinese strategy, born of weakness, was to reject, delay, or ignore both parts of the Russian strategy. Seeing the Russian buildup and feeling its effects, the Chinese undertook a policy of gradual diplomatic retreat. Their note of May 24 dropped the previous de facto opposition to negotiations (their pronouncements had always stressed the desirability of such talks and blamed the Russians for their breakdown) and conceded that the abortive 1964 negotiations might now be resumed. Their presence at the Ussuri-Amur border talks in Khabarovsk from June to August and their willingness to sign a one-year navigation agreement with the Russians constituted two further steps toward negotiations. Finally, after the Peking airport meeting in September, the Chinese not only accepted the Soviet bid to resume full-scale negotiations but also, in their note of October 8, dropped the one condition that had been the primary obstacle to agreement in 1964--that the Russians agree on the "unequalness" of the historic series of treaties defining the border before there could be any further movement toward a new treaty. These concessions made it appear that, procedurally and substantively, little separated the two parties from quick and final agreement except horse-trading some unimportant river islands and small amounts of territory on the Sinkiang-Tadzhik border.

After the negotiations began, however, the Chinese backed away from this advanced position and threw up a further obstacle by demanding that the Russians join in mutually withdrawing military

forces at least fifty kilometers from the border. The trick was to convince the Russians that, through minor (but reversible) changes in the Chinese position, a negotiated solution to the border problem was not entirely out of the question. The Chinese felt they had no choice but to go along with the Soviet proposals for resuming negotiations. They concluded it was better to buy off the Russians in the short run through negotiations than, like those conducted in 1964, they had no intention of carrying to conclusion on Soviet terms. 18/

#### Soviet Strategy after September 1969

The Chou-Kosygin meeting in Peking signaled the successful conclusion of Moscow's strategy of coercing the Chinese back to the negotiating table and of convincing them that any further disruptive behavior along the border would be to their disadvantage. Although the talks were not productive and the Chinese could be said to have attained their own goal of preventing higher levels of Soviet violence, border incidents were no longer a major contributing factor to continued Sino-Soviet animosity. The record shows clearly that, after the talks began, publicly reported incidents declined to a frequency of one to three a year and were much less severe. Several of these were clearly associated with training exercises of one side to which the other side chose to react; others were evidently intentional probings of the opposition's defenses. With the large increase in troop dispositions along the frontier after March 1969,

this steep decline in publicly reported incidents can only indicate that both sides agreed, tacitly or explicitly, to carry out the relevant clause of the Soviet proposal of September 11 (and the Chinese proposal of October 8, 1969), to maintain the status quo along the frontier until the exact location of the boundary was agreed upon and delimited, to avoid armed conflicts and to stop sending forces into disputed areas or to disengage forces that had penetrated those areas.

In general, the impression after September 1969 is of a border closely guarded by both sides. Each side took extreme precautions to prevent accidental local clashes and avoided escalation to the use of more destructive weapon systems and of larger numbers of men. In most cases, regular army units were not engaged, at least if one believes the Soviet accounts are accurate (the Chinese version is usually either lacking in detail or missing). The forces engaged were KGB-controlled border troops on the Soviet side and probably similar formations of Production and Construction Corps units on the Chinese side.

Relative quietude along the frontier thus stemmed from the Peking agreement (whether tacit or negotiated), the military buildup on both sides, and the safety valve of periodic border negotiations. Neither side wished to engage the other frequently, although occasional deliberate forays tested the defenses of the opposition. Each charged the other with this sort of activity--the Russians accusing the Chinese of conducting training operations only

meters from the Mongolian boundary and the Chinese charging the Russians with flying aircraft several kilometers into Chinese territory--but neither seems to have reacted violently to such movements. The danger of escalation and the density of troops along the frontier were too high for punitive measures.

The small number of publicized incidents amounted to one side's putting a toe across the line (or patrolling disputed areas at times and in ways slightly different from those tacitly agreed upon) and then quickly withdrawing it. It is quite possible that the two sides agreed to suppress news of further incidents. In 1974, for instance, there were rumors and allegations of a large clash on the Sinkiang-Kazakhstan border, 19/ and in November of that year both Moscow and Peking denied Western reports of five battles along the Sino-Mongolian frontier. 20/ The location of reported incidents has varied. In the Sinkiang-Kazakhstan region, alleged incursions almost invariably occurred in the Dzungarian Gates area; and along the Amur-Ussuri boundary, the islands of disputed ownership were the scene of alleged clashes, but not the shoreline. The exact location of alleged incidents on the Sino-Mongolian frontier is difficult to determine because neither side chose to publicize them.

There were a number of other specific occurrences related to border tension: the seizure and expulsion of two Soviet diplomats in Peking in 1974 on spy charges; 21/ the detention in China, and later the release, of a Soviet helicopter and its crew after

the Russians alleged it had lost its bearings and run out of fuel while on a medical evacuation mission; 22/ Soviet refusal, until 1974, to allow Chinese ships to navigate the Kazakevichevo channel near Khabarovsk without permission during the summer low-water season; 23/ a maritime accident off Hainan; 24/ slowness or inability to come to agreement on the yearly river navigation agreements; and a Soviet show of force in early 1978. 25/ Each of these was an additional indicator of the trouble on the border and therefore of Sino-Soviet relations in general--and a gauge of the degree of progress, or lack thereof, of the Peking border talks and of Soviet strategy.

More broadly, each side took precautions in the regions on its own side of the boundary to build up the economy and population, invest in infrastructure, cement the loyalty of local native peoples to the national government, and send out from its core area (especially in the Chinese case) large numbers of people from the dominant ethnic group. On the Soviet side, the government offered monetary incentives to settlers willing to relocate near the boundary, began construction of the Baikal-Amur Mainline railway, placed farming communities on previously uninhabited (or fitfully inhabited) riverine islands, sought to prove that disputed areas had long been occupied by peoples now part of the Soviet Union, changed names of border towns to more Slavic-sounding ones, and in general accelerated Siberian development as much as possible.

Apparently the Soviet Union also harbored renewed ambition for making Sinkiang a buffer state like Mongolia, since there were persistent reports that the authorities were organizing a Free Turkestan movement, complete with its own military force and composed of those who had fled Sinkiang in the 1962 Ili disturbances. Based in Alma-Ata and led by, among others, General Zunun Taipov, a former Sinkiang Uigur leader of long standing, this scheme peaked in the early 1970s. 26/ Thereafter it seems to have received less Soviet support, as the Chinese sent in large numbers of former members of the Red Guard, boosting the proportion of Han Chinese in the population to over half of the nearly ten million inhabitants. The Russians charged the Chinese with forcibly assimilating border minority peoples, especially in Inner Mongolia, where an uprising was allegedly quelled by the use of tanks and artillery. The Chinese also sent 150,000 former members of the Red Guard into Heilungkiang to augment the Production and Construction Corps and began a major archaeological effort to prove that border regions historically have been part of China.

#### The Military Buildup

These efforts, important though they were, were second in importance to the military buildup by both sides. The forces were augmented at different times so that, in the early 1970s, the Soviet Union was able to emplace a much more powerful force than the Chinese (although not larger in number), arousing Chinese fears of

Russian aggressive military acts. But after 1972 the Chinese began to send to the border sufficient reinforcements--men and weapons--to make a major Russian ground offensive very costly. Still later, in 1976 and after, continuation of the Soviet buildup in sophisticated weapons, communications, and nuclear missiles combined with increasing Chinese military backwardness (the product of neglect during the Cultural Revolution) to produce an even greater imbalance in favor of the Soviet Union. The Chinese buildup, which by 1975 was thought to have evened the balance sufficiently to prevent Soviet military actions in or threats against China, only betrayed Peking's military weakness. This resulted in a flurry of Chinese military purchase missions in Europe, Peking's extreme diplomatic tilt toward the United States and Japan, and the prominence given the military component of the post-Maoist modernization drive.

It is difficult to accurately describe the size and quality of opposing forces: authoritative estimations 27 depend not only on unavailable data about the actual number of men along the border, their specific location, their weapons and their logistic backup, but also on such qualitative estimates as the strategy and tactics of the two sides, their morale and training, and specific assumptions about war initiation and goals. Much of the effort to estimate the qualitative factors turns out to be unnecessary, however, because neither side intends to launch a major land offensive against the other (either to overthrow the other's government or to seize large parts of its territory) and because the nuclear retaliatory capability of both sides is so high.

Moscow was generally alarmed at Chinese behavior at Damansky and after, which it attributed to Cultural Revolution excesses and to Mao Tse-tung's perfidy. Soviet leaders therefore resolved to garrison their (and the



Mongolians') border with China heavily enough to make a repetition of the March 1969 events very costly to Peking and to use the threat of more widespread military action to force the Chinese to settle the border issue on its merits as the Soviet leaders understood them. Hence, the Russians increased the number of divisions in the border regions from fifteen understrength formations to over forty at higher levels of readiness; provided them with the most advanced equipment, including nuclear missiles and tactical warheads; filled out the border troop divisions; engaged in constant patrolling of land and water; undertook augmented civil defense measures in cities within Chinese nuclear range (which included more and more of the Soviet Union with each passing year); and initiated a massive construction program to lay the necessary logistical base for a large, permanent border force.

Considered by the Russians a set of defensive measures, the program nonetheless could be, and was, construed by the Chinese as threatening. Because Peking was innately suspicious of Moscow for ideological reasons and because it had to judge the Soviet military machine by its capabilities and perceived tactics (which are often offensive), the Chinese were forced to increase the size, change the disposition, and upgrade the equipment of their own formations. The immediate cost was high: the Cultural Revolution had to be curtailed; the People's Liberation Army had to divide itself between politico-industrial administration and training and defense duties; support of such allies as Pakistan in 1971 and North Vietnam until 1974 had to take second place to opposing the Soviet threat; compromises had to be made with the United States over the Taiwan issue to alleviate the possibility of a two-front conflict; and China's policy toward every

issue and nation had to be governed on the basis of their relation to the Sino-Soviet conflict. The Chinese did match the Soviet increase in manpower if not in modernity of equipment (although they were unable to send significant additional ground divisions to the border regions until 1972, four years after the Russian buildup began). Peking also increased the defense budget; mobilized large numbers of urban youths to serve in the Production and Construction Corps in the northern and western provinces; strengthened the militia program; and began a crash civil defense effort, including the well-known tunnel networks in major cities. Finally, Peking made a number of administrative changes in provincial boundaries, one of which was the division of Inner Mongolia among its neighbors allegedly for defense purposes. By 1974 these changes had gone some distance to redressing, if only temporarily, the 1969 imbalance of forces.

Equally important, the Chinese continued to develop their nuclear and missile program but changed its direction: more effort was made to counter the Soviet menace by concentrating on short and medium (3,000-mile) range missiles, forgoing the development of intercontinental range missiles expected by the Americans, and deploying them in diverse, semi-hardened locations capable of reaching most large Soviet cities--even, after 1976, Moscow. Moreover, the production and testing of nuclear weapons continued, and, through increased production capacity and the use of older jet bombers, by the mid-1970s a significant air-delivery capability existed. China dispersed these aircraft and weapons around the full complement of about two hundred Chinese bases reasonably near the Soviet border, thereby ensuring that a Soviet preemptive strike could not destroy Chinese retaliatory ability without risking obliteration of a sizable number of Soviet cities.

It is difficult to describe and evaluate the details of Soviet and Chinese dispositions. Not only are particulars closely held by both sides for obvious reasons, but force composition varies with the circumstances postulated, measurement of forces and their locations by outside authorities varies from year to year, and manpower figures signify increasingly less as sophisticated weaponry is deployed. It is usually stated that the Soviet Union had by 1975 built its ground forces up to a level of forty-five divisions, including two in Mongolia, with others in the Trans-Baikal Military District available for quick reinforcement. This remained relatively stable through mid-1978 (forty-three divisions, including three in Mongolia). Only about one-third of these were in the highest category of readiness. But thanks to the heavy investment in logistics, construction, and pre-positioning of equipment that had taken place since 1969, many more divisions could be brought in without too much effort.

Much the same could be said of the Chinese. By 1975 they had about fifty Main Force divisions in the Shenyang and Peking Military Regions, fifteen in the Lanchow Military Region, and perhaps eight in Sinkiang. By 1976 these had increased to about sixty-seven Main Force divisions in the first two regions, and they remained relatively stable thereafter. As in the Soviet case, not all of them carried out border duties. On the other hand, in an emergency additional formations could quickly be sent from other areas of the country.

Each state also maintained a certain percentage of its forces for possible duty in areas not associated with the Sino-Soviet border problem: the Soviet Union in Eastern and Western Europe and in the Middle East; China

in South and Southeast Asia, the Fukien Strait, and Korea. Both also maintained large numbers of men for internal duties; this was particularly important for China in the post-Mao era, when there could be disorder; also for the past decade the PLA had been centrally involved in politics and administration. Moreover, there was the problem of how to evaluate the real strength, in any major test with the Soviet Union, of China's Local Forces (some of whom were border defense troops) and Production and Construction Corps. Evaluations of the forces available to both the Soviet Union and China could thus vary widely.

Geographic circumstances determined much of the specific location of Russian and Chinese formations and forced Moscow and Peking to adopt differing strategies. Because so much of the Soviet population in Siberia and the Far East is concentrated along the Trans-Siberian Railway and because this vital transportation artery often runs, because of weather and terrain, quite close to the Chinese border, Moscow had to deploy many of its forces and station much of its equipment close to the boundary, even south of the railway. Since the Chinese could not know the exact nature of Soviet intentions, they had to see this location as a threat to Chinese territory to the immediate south--Sinkiang, Kansu, Inner Mongolia, and Heilungkiang. Since the Russians had nowhere to retreat in a northerly direction except onto tundra and ice (or, in the case of the Primorskaya, into seawater), Moscow had to adopt a strategy of preventing incursion by any Chinese force and to reject out of hand any Chinese suggestion for mutual withdrawal from the border to any but short distances. This was especially the case near such cities as Khabarovsk, which was close to the border, across the river from land claimed by China, and Vladivostok.

The Chinese dared not move their main force too close to the border since this would have risked destruction or entrapment in the wastes of Sinkiang, Kansu, and Inner Mongolia. Moreover, most of the Chinese population live quite a bit to the south. Those who do live near the Soviet border are minority peoples whose cousins are Soviet citizens and who, in the case of the Sinkiang Kazakhs, have evinced a propensity to attempt to reunite themselves with their relatives.

Chinese strategy and force locations followed from these facts: the main army force had to be held back from the border to defend important cities (such as Peking) and facilities (such as the Lop Nor and Shuang Ch'eng-tze nuclear and missile sites) to the south; the minority peoples had to be watched, a job for the influx of Han settlers, who at the same time, by spreading themselves out through agricultural colonization acted as a paramilitary barrier to advancing Soviet forces; and in case of invasion, the army and the people (mostly peasants on communes) would have to coalesce to present the Russians with a combination of conventional defense and guerilla war tactics--"people's war." As the colonization effort proceeded and as the military grew stronger, regular army formations would advance even closer to the Soviet border until at some point--depending on the thickness of the logistical supply network, the density of troops and population, and the type of weaponry supplied--the main Chinese forces could be located as close to the border as the Soviet formations were. Meanwhile, aggressive patrolling and surveillance by border divisions, local forces, and Production and Construction Corps cadres would presumably forestall or warn of Soviet attack.

Central to the strategies of both the Soviet Union and China, and modifying the above conclusions to some extent, was their possession of sizable numbers of nuclear weapons. Since the beginning of the Sino-Soviet dispute, Moscow has had enough nuclear weapons to punish China severely for any territorial transgression. This constituted only a background factor until the 1969 clashes, however, and even then their use would hardly have been practical except in the most severe circumstances, scarcely imaginable despite talk in the summer of 1969 of preemptive strikes against Chinese nuclear production and test facilities, rocket and nuclear storage sites, and air bases. But once the Soviet Union began to deploy its increasingly strong ground forces in the border region, the entire Chinese position, strategic and tactical, was threatened, because tactical nuclear weapons were integral to Soviet (not Chinese) motorized and armored divisions and because Soviet (but not Chinese) formations were trained and equipped to fight from the outset on a nuclearized battlefield.

For a while before 1972 a Soviet preemptive attack could have destroyed nearly all Chinese nuclear and missile facilities, air bases, sea bases, and the army camps, and then have occupied significant portions of the Chinese land mass, including the capital region. Hundreds of millions would have been killed, of course, including millions in neighboring countries. It was this wider effect, together with the resultant weakened Soviet strategic position vis-à-vis the United States and the strong possibility of an alliance of all other major states against the Soviet Union, that made such a situation unlikely. 28/ Nonetheless, the Chinese leaders apparently found it plausible and adjusted their military and diplomatic posture accordingly. To judge from their statements and acts,

the Chinese continued to take the Soviet threat seriously even after the Soviet Far Eastern buildup eased in 1976, for they increasingly realized their own weakness.

Other, more realistic contingencies also had to be faced by Peking. Perhaps the most serious was the possibility of attempted Soviet interference in the politics of the post-Mao succession struggle, supporting militarily one or another faction to help establish a pro-Soviet government or occupying such critical border regions as Sinkiang or parts of Heilungkiang.<sup>29/</sup> While the Soviet Union probably reacted to this with incredulity and was quick to disclaim any offensive intentions, the Chinese, combining an evaluation of actual Soviet military capabilities with heavy criticism of Soviet ideological policies (which informed their evaluation of Soviet military intentions), could only plan for the worst. It was thus the nuclear potential of a very strong Soviet military force adjacent to the Chinese border that drove the Chinese to reinforce their own border defenses heavily; to devote increasing portions of their domestic production to conventional hardware and non-intercontinental-range ballistic missiles; to look to NATO for sales of military hardware; to encourage NATO to increase its readiness; and to interrupt the revolutionary activities of the Red Guard and transfer its members to Production and Construction Corps units next to the boundary. The Soviet threat was one of the major catalysts in the post-Mao drive to modernize the economy at any cost.

By 1975 the Chinese effort had gone some distance toward redressing the imbalance. A few infantry divisions had been converted to armored formations, demonstrating that Peking had the productive capacity for such

changes. And in the next three years, Peking added over a million men to the PLA, which provided the flexibility needed for a conventional response to Soviet attack. Those forces, when equipped eventually with modern arms, will be able to make the Soviet Union pause before attempting to invade or punish. Moreover, by the mid-1970s, China had sufficient nuclear retaliatory potential to deter all but the largest Soviet preemptive attacks and to threaten major cities in European Russia, including Moscow. China had thus advanced from the minimal deterrence posture of the 1960s to a strategy based on increasingly hardened and dispersed missiles aimed at the Soviet, if not yet the American, homeland. With or without prolongation of the border conflict, this trend will continue, qualitatively and quantitatively.

Despite these improvements, however, by 1978 the Soviet Union had managed once again to weigh the balance in its favor. Its border force had become a well-oiled machine of increasingly high mechanical quality, and the maneuvers staged for the spring tour by Leonid Brezhnev that year alarmed Peking anew. A new factor emerged in 1977 and became prominent in 1978 with the Vietnamese-Cambodian war. Beginning for different reasons, it quickly took on Sino-Soviet dimensions as Moscow and Peking supported the opposing Southeast Asian combatants. That was bad for Peking: (1) it could not afford to go to war in Southeast Asia to say nothing of against the Soviet Union directly, at the very beginning of its modernization drive; (2) on the other hand, it could not sit by and watch the Vietnamese upset the balance in Southeast Asia by absorbing Cambodia; (3) it now had to face the prospect of immobilizing, at great distance from the Sino-Soviet border,



a large portion of its own forces deployed in central, south, and southwest China; and (4) in 1978 it faced the unpalatable prospect of a two-front conflict--Sino-Soviet and Sino-Vietnamese--as a result of the new Soviet-Vietnam alliance. This last development--seen as defensive and justifiable by the Russians--added a tragic dynamic to the Sino-Soviet border problem. Each power misperceived the policy and the tactics of the other, causing a spiral of events that could well have ended in war.

The tremendous disparity in overall strength favoring the Soviet Union was evident if one compared numbers of nuclear-capable delivery vehicles and, therefore, minimal quantities of nuclear warheads. While the Soviet Union had to hold a large proportion of these in reserve for the deterrent relationship with the United States and for waging war against America and its allies in Europe and elsewhere, the residual available for potential use against China was still enormous and represented (assuming that each vehicle was capable of delivering at least one nuclear warhead) a destructive potential of horrendous proportions. China by 1978 had about 450 nuclear delivery vehicles (not counting MIG-19s, MIG-21s, and F-9s, all of which presumably had to be used for interceptor, reconnaissance, and tactical support functions); the Soviet Union had 5031 vehicles (again not counting its large supply of jet fighter aircraft, many of which were nuclear capable). Even if only 20 percent of the Soviet force were earmarked for the Chinese theater, about 1,000 vehicles would still be available. And this presumed only one nuclear warhead per delivery whereas an increasing percentage of medium-range Soviet missiles were being equipped with MIRVs. The Soviet Union also had a strong and dispersed air defense

system that could probably have intercepted and destroyed a large percentage of , if not all, Chinese IL-28s and TU-16s. Finally, each Soviet ground unit had a nuclear capacity, either in the form of ground-to-ground missiles or small-unit tactical nuclear weapons. When the 1970 International Institute for Strategic Studies figure of 3,500 such warheads is used, expanded proportionate to the number of additional Soviet divisions in 1978 (twelve), and on the assumption that such weapons were available for use against China roughly in proportion to the percentage of the Red Army deployed against China, another 970 warheads could be added. This ignores the absolute superiority the Soviet Union enjoyed in conventional firepower, artillery, armor, and battlefield mobility. Thus in 1978 the overall military balance was heavily weighted in favor of the Soviet Union.

This imbalance in numbers of nuclear weapons, delivery capability, and modernity of equipment was likely to continue for about five years since basically it was the product of the differences in degree of industrialization in the two countries. However, China's own nuclear deterrent, together with its large, trained, and increasingly modern ground force, its mass of paramilitary units in the border regions, and its active militia made any large Soviet attack unlikely. China's possession of a more than minimal nuclear deterrent therefore partly neutralized the Soviet advantage in numbers of delivery vehicles and modernity of conventional equipment in any reasonable (less than all-out attack) short-term situation.

The more time China had to increase its own nuclear supply and modernize its military, the closer to actual equality the two military

machines would come. Even before the achievement of long-run military stability, however, approximate equality could exist between the Soviet Union and China in the border military situation. Reaching that point would restore Chinese interest in settling the issue. The three necessary conditions would be rough equality in force capability; mutual realization that further competition in military preparedness would be excessively costly and not even marginally effective; and a stable balance of power in Asia as a whole, including as elements the policies and instrumentalities of the United States and Japan.

#### Analysis of Soviet Behavior

If the above represents the generalities of the Sino-Soviet border conflicts in 1969 and beyond, what about the particulars of Soviet behavior? The foreign policy of any state stems from its general concerns and interests, on the one hand, and its specific operational objectives (greatly dependent on time and policy issues), on the other. Moscow felt it had no choice but to respond strongly, directly, and militarily to perceived Chinese threats at specific border locations and to the long-term challenge presented by China's ever-increasing power and unfriendly attitude. In other words, the Russians genuinely believed their actions were defensive and prophylactic and that not to react would have been to show weakness under provocation. Moreover, with its increasing problems at home, 30/ the Soviet leadership could not domestically admit weakness and need not have admitted it internationally. After all, the USSR was rapidly growing in most of the physical measures of national power particularly military. Thus Soviet use of the military instrument (more

Soviet-initiated incidents and the border buildup) served three ends: to force the Chinese back to the negotiating table, to keep them there (even if no progress took place) as a means of defusing border tension, and to set the stage for eventual agreement on that and other divisive issues.

Although there is no direct evidence, it seems likely that a second Russian motivation was to keep the talks going as a counter to the effort by China and the United States to improve their own relations. Such an improvement, if it eventuated in an anti-Soviet Sino-American entente, would be a diplomatic disaster for the Soviet Union. One way to forestall such an eventuality would be to maintain contact with the Chinese, as far as possible, in attempting to resolve outstanding issues. 31/ The talks thus had taken on a different character by 1972, when it became apparent that progress on the merits of the question was impossible. Thereafter, the Russians probably felt increasingly inhibited from using military force against the Chinese, from carrying the border buildup beyond the bounds that they regarded as defensive, and from major probes or tests of China's military reactions, to avoid driving Peking even more quickly toward Washington.

The border buildup policy thus impaled Soviet policymakers on the horns of a dilemma. On the one hand, they had to defend their homeland and encourage the Chinese to negotiate a settlement. Together with the occasional use of minimal force, the border buildup did deter the Chinese from perpetuating another Damansky Island incident and did keep them at the negotiating table. On the other hand, the Russians wanted to discourage the Chinese from modernizing their own military forces and from forming an

anti-Soviet entente with the United States. The buildup and the use of force against the Chinese, however, drove the Chinese straight in that direction. As the Kremlin solved its short-term security problem, therefore, it created a much greater long-term threat. The cure turned out to be worse than the disease.

There is no overt indication of disagreement among members of the Soviet Politburo about the border question. It may be that there have been internal differences over the timing and the magnitude of specific military actions, but available evidence points to almost complete unanimity on policy toward China. Indeed, it seems likely that Brezhnev has used the China issue to increase the degree of agreement in the Kremlin and throughout the country on issues not directly related to China. It is too much to say that Moscow became dependent on the "China threat" as a principal means of carrying out its general domestic program of political suppression and heavy industrial development. But it seems reasonable to suppose that the China factor did contribute heavily to the decision to build up Soviet military forces to very high levels, did influence many other aspects of Soviet foreign policy, and was used as one excuse to continue biasing the economy against a consumer orientation.

At times there may have been disagreement in the Politburo over what general or specific policies to adopt toward China. Several observers 32/ have claimed the existence of factions that take consistently different positions on a range of issues, including China. For instance, the "Neo-Stalinists" were said to be in favor of improving relations with China, but the "Russian Nationalists" allegedly professed great fear and hatred of

Peking. The "Conservative Authoritarians" (presumably led by Brezhnev) were thought to favor a compromise agreement with China, as were the "Limited Modernizers," but neither supposedly wished to go as far toward China ideologically as did the Neo-Stalinists. If there were divisions in the leadership along these lines, and if Soviet Politburo policy was the product of a balance among them (with the Brezhnev group having its way because of its centrist position), it follows that Moscow's China policy (among other Soviet foreign policy orientations) could change were the dominance of the Brezhnev group to cease.

#### Soviet Communications with China

Investigation 33/ of how the Russians communicated with the Chinese about the border issue other than through use of force reveals additional facets of Soviet behavior in force-related situations. Soviet verbal behavior toward the Chinese varies with the kind of communicator, the style and tone of the communication, the forum, and the communication's content. Three propositions emerge from such an investigation. First, there is a hierarchy among Soviet communicators, according to the seriousness of the situation, moving from the most serious to the least serious situation:

- named Politburo member;
- Victor Louis (the Soviet "journalist");
- "I. Aleksandrov" (pseudonym for a variety of party and government officials);
- ambassador or negotiator;
- Tass
- lower-level official;
- scholar.

Second, certain communicators appear only during a crisis or military incident (for instance, Victor Louis), others only just before, or to ward off, a crisis (top officials, "I. Aleksandrov"), some just after a crisis or incident (Tass), and some only in noncrisis situations (scholars, low-level officials). Third, the threat content varies according to the degree of seriousness of the situation and parallels that of the level of the communicator. This is not the case, however, for the style and tone of the reportage, where the communications most indicative of trouble (Victor Louis interviews and "I. Aleksandrov" editorials) are sometimes the least ideological in tone, but "scholarly" articles are often the most propagandistic. The Russians deliberately used these differences to warn the Chinese of the growing danger of Peking's pursuing a given course of action, to support the Soviet campaign to solve the border question by negotiation, and to accompany--and afterwards justify--the use of force against the Chinese. Moreover, although direct evidence is lacking, subsequent Chinese behavior indicates that Peking understood the import of this hierarchy of communications and acted accordingly. This is not to say that Peking always behaved as Moscow desired it to; in the long run, the Chinese became more stridently anti-Soviet than ever. But for communications about the border incidents of which we have knowledge, it appears that the Chinese were more cautious the more the degree of threat content--implied or expressed--increased.

Finally, public Soviet communications during border incident periods were nonexistent. This is not surprising, since the duration of each period was short, usually no more than a few days. Most often, there was no

announcement of any sort after an incident, a practice usually paralleled by the Chinese. When one side did choose to make a public issue of an incident, as for instance the March-September 1969 clashes, the 1974 helicopter incident, or the 1978 "escaped criminal" affair, the purpose was to forward some related but nonmilitary policy goal--negotiations, a better agreement, or propaganda and patriotism on the Soviet side; and the necessity for defense and economic construction, anti-Sovietism, or justification for the negotiating position on the Chinese side. The communications pattern thus tended to be escalation of the seriousness of the communicated threat on the Soviet side, often paralleled by increasingly strident propaganda and self-justification on the Chinese side; occurrence of a planned military option against the Chinese, when no public communications were exchanged; and the phase after the incident, when the propaganda content of communications peaked even though announcement of the actual incident was not necessarily made.

#### Chinese Behavior

It is clear that the Soviet Union overreacted to the March 2, 1969, incident, overgarrisoned its side of the Sino-Soviet border, frightened the Chinese into thinking a major attack was coming, and contributed to its own long-term insecurity by controlling the problem in the interim. But the Russians cannot be blamed entirely for their Tar Baby-like predicament. China's anti-Russian psychological attitudes, its too-anti-Soviet policy of two decades, its Damansky Island military initiative, and its post-1968 attempt to construct a world anti-Soviet alliance all contributed to frightening the Russians into overreaction. But it is still unclear why the



Chinese ambushed the Russians on March 2, 1969, why they acted in cold blood. 34/ And it is still unknown whether there were acute divisions in the Chinese leadership over whether to carry out the Damansky Island operation and over how, in general, to respond to the Soviet military initiatives of March 15, 1969, and afterward. It seems clear that, while post-1949 Chinese Communist political history does provide several examples of policy differences over how to deal with the Soviet Union, after 1969 the Chinese leadership was more nearly unified than ever before on this question. Although the Chinese themselves charged Lin Piao with advocating rapprochement with the Russians during the 1969-71 period, 35/ no strong factual evidence has been advanced to support that charge. In fact, both Maoist and post-Maoist Chinese leaders seem to have been convinced of the need to deal with the Soviet Union both directly through China's military buildup and changed military dispositions and indirectly through China's opening to the United States, Japan, Western Europe, and other states perceived to be anti-Soviet.

It also seems likely that there was little or no argument among Chinese leaders over general policy toward Russia on both military and other issues. The Chinese often seemed as emotional about the Russians as the Russians were about them, an attitude not produced just by the post-1960 decade of Sino-Soviet relations but thoroughly ingrained in the Chinese psyche by centuries of dealing with China's northern neighbors. To be sure, in so thoroughly opposing the Russians on all fronts, the Chinese merely carried out what they perceived to be the objective interests of the Chinese state: standing as a bulwark against the spread into Asia of ever-expanding

Soviet military, political, and economic power. But this also accentuated deep-seated emotional and racial attitudes toward the Russians. It seems likely that by early 1969 the Chinese had concluded that the time had come to draw a line against further Soviet expansion or threat of expansion directly on their border and indirectly in other regions of Asia. They seem to have reasoned that, if they could throw the Russians off balance, perhaps the Russians could be discouraged from proceeding with the military buildup they had begun in 1956. Peking seems not to have expected or realized that carrying out the Damansky Island operation would prompt Moscow to respond in ways difficult for the Chinese to handle. So whereas Peking's purpose was at first prophylactic, from March 15 the Chinese at best were able to hold their own defensively and at worst found themselves pushed around by the Russians at any time or place Moscow desired.

On the other hand, the Chinese all along understood Soviet motivation in using force against them. Their conclusions about Soviet ideology and political purposes were precisely those described above for the Soviet Union. While it is not known what the Chinese were able to do to prepare for the anticipated Soviet blows, they could and did conclude that the blows were coming and that they themselves could do nothing short of delaying as long as possible and, in the end, giving way to the Russians.

After March 15 Peking dared not respond to the Russians tit for tat, lest Moscow escalate the level of violence. And at no time thereafter were the Chinese sure that the Russians would not escalate even further, in response to Chinese retaliation, to levels that they could not handle. Still, the Chinese apparently did not believe the Russians would move to such a high

level of violence that the security of the Chinese state or the existence of the leadership would be imperiled. Hence, they concluded that they were under no acute pressure to give way to Moscow, except provisionally, over the border issue. In this they seem to have gauged the Russians correctly. So while taking an occasional beating from the Russians, Peking calculated that its very existence was not at stake, that it would not have to compromise at the negotiating table, and that there was still time to move against the Russians in several ways.

Of course, the Chinese public had to be assured that the situation was under control and that the leadership knew how to deal with it. That is one reason Peking put so much propaganda effort into the anti-Soviet aspects of the Lin Biao campaign after 1971 and linked most departures from domestic and foreign policies to the need to stand up to the Russians. A threat similar to that of the Soviet Union has toppled many a government, but in the Chinese case it was carefully turned to account, first by Mao and later by his successors. Both found the policy of daring the Soviet Union a workable strategy in a bad situation.

The Chinese also used the Soviet threat, first, to reconstitute their international political position, which had been severely degraded during the Cultural Revolution, and second, to begin the long process of restructuring world politics around Peking's division of the globe into first, second, and third worlds. By the late 1970s, those two processes had been so successful that, in contrast to 1969, China had managed politically if not always militarily to contain Soviet expansion in Northeast and East Asia, although surely not in South and Southeast Asia; loosened Moscow's grip on such former allies as India; made a friend out of its

principal former enemy, Japan; convinced many in the third world that their interests lay with Peking, not Moscow; fully restored relations with the United States; and even caused many to think about the desirability of establishing a worldwide coalition against the Kremlin led by China and the United States. 36/ So whereas the Russians were successful in coercing the Chinese in every particular instance of military operations along the border, the cost was exceedingly high in terms of deleterious changes in the long-term balance of power in Asia and throughout the world. Finally, although the Chinese policy of out-and-out anti-Sovietism was based on interests besides those arising from the military clashes, the Chinese probably would not have gone so far or so fast along the roads just indicated had it not been for the USSR's use of force.

#### The Role of the United States

No third parties were directly involved in any of the border incidents between the Soviet Union and China. However, in a broad sense, Chinese and Soviet policy and actions toward each other after early 1969 were taken with one eye on the United States. Indeed, since 1950 China has been a major factor in Soviet-American relations and hence in the configuration of world politics. To decisionmakers in Washington, Moscow and Peking the basis of post-World War II international relations has been the triangular interaction of the United States, China, and the Soviet Union. 37/ This generality is clearly illustrated by the American reaction to the Sino-Soviet border incidents and related changes in the shape of the international system after 1969. The Damansky Island incidents formed the dividing line between the cold war and the era of multipolar international political maneuver in

which we now live.

American reaction to the incidents and to subsequent Russian use of force is usefully expressed by juxtaposing short- and long-term policy interests. In the short run, American statesmen feared that the incidents would lead to Sino-Soviet war, to a change in the East-West balance of power, or to the possible reduction of China by Soviet nuclear attack to a minor political actor. Perhaps until the end of 1971 it was not clear in Washington whether the Soviet Union would carry its campaign against China to the point of initiating a Sino-Soviet war. Washington was quick to realize that American interests lay in preserving a strong and united China as a bulwark against Soviet expansion in Asia and globally, even though China would still be strongly Communist and basically anti-American as well. Desire to maintain the balance of power overcame fundamental ideological differences with Peking.

Moscow was therefore publicly and privately warned that the United States would view any use of force against China with extreme disfavor, and after 1971 initiatives were taken to help redress the military balance of power between Moscow and Peking through material--though strictly nonmilitary support of the Chinese regime. This is not to suggest that at that early stage the United States would have rendered actual military support to Peking if the Soviet Union had attacked China. American involvement in Vietnam precluded that possibility, just as did domestic opposition to too close a relationship with Peking under any circumstance. Nonetheless, such possibilities were at least discussed in Washington, and the groundwork was thereby laid for the reconstitution of ties with Peking. It is not too much to say that the Damansky Island incidents were major contributants to the Kissinger trip to Peking in mid-1971, the Nixon visit and the Shanghai communique in 1972, and

detente between Peking and Washington in the years that followed.

In the long term, the two initial incidents, coupled with Soviet coercion of the Chinese after 1969, led to a reorientation in world politics. Equally important, Soviet willingness to use force also contributed to the increasingly negative American reappraisal of Soviet-American detente that pushed the superpowers apart in the mid-1970s. Washington policymakers were at first willing to grant that the large buildup of Soviet conventional and nuclear forces was motivated by Moscow's perception of the Chinese threat. Later when the magnitude of the Soviet buildup on the Western as well as the Eastern frontier became apparent, American appraisal became much less charitable. At first it was thought that the Eastern border buildup against the Chinese would divert Soviet attention from Europe and perhaps lead to Soviet willingness to compromise on such issues as strategic arms limitation and mutual and balanced force reductions. But when it became clear that the Chinese threat was fueling an even greater acceleration of Soviet force augmentation in Europe as well as globally, American sympathy for the Soviet plight declined precipitously. As the Soviet buildup continued, the feeling grew in Washington that the United States and China had a common interest in containing the spread of Soviet influence everywhere.

Soviet military actions against China, including both the initiation of border incidents and the military buildup along the Sino-Soviet border, changed American policy toward both Communist states. It is true that the United States did very little to directly support China. To the end of 1978, no American military equipment had gone to China, and policymakers in Washington had not seriously considered the demonstrative use of U.S.

military power on behalf of the Chinese. Still the possibility of obtaining American military support and the reality of growing Sino-U.S. political and economic ties increased China's confidence and its resistance to the Soviet Union. 36/ These changes in American policy were read in Moscow as the beginning of a Sino-American entente designed to contain the Soviet Union, despite clear American statements to Moscow that such was not Washington's intent. 39/ The Russians thus confused a policy of renewed containment--this time a joint Chinese-American-European policy--with an attempt to prevent the Soviet Union from achieving its minimal goal of forcing world acceptance of its superpower status. The Damansky incidents thus caused strain in Soviet relations with Washington; contributed, more than anything else, to the continuing deterioration of Soviet relations with Peking; and provided the catalyst for Peking-Washington detente.

#### Conclusions

I have already argued that the USSR forced China to conform to its wishes on the border question, in the sense that China perpetrated no further military provocation similar to the first Damansky incident. Moreover, China was constrained to enter into negotiations with the Soviet Union, even though it had no intention, before restoring relative military equality, of coming to any final agreement on the border question or on any other issue. I have also concluded that China would not have found itself in this position had it not been for the Soviet willingness to use military force against it. But the longer-run outcome displeased Moscow in three ways: (1) China became even more anti-Soviet than before; (2) the United States and China moved first to detente and then toward

rapprochement in the face of the mutually perceived Soviet threat; and (3) as a result the pattern of world politics changed in a way that did not favor the Soviet Union. Moreover, American attitudes and policies toward it were significantly affected when Washington saw how ready the Soviet Union was to use force to attain its goals. This was demonstrated not merely by the Sino-Soviet border incidents, but also by its invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968; its threat to intervene in the Middle East in 1973; its machinations in Africa, Southeast Asia, and South Asia in the middle and late 1970s; and its enormous strategic and conventional military buildup throughout the 1960s and 1970s. If not the principal cause of Sino-American detente, then, American perception of this Soviet propensity to turn to the military, of which the Chinese case was an illustration, was nevertheless a major contributor.

Of central importance to the outcome of the border clashes was the general political-strategic atmosphere surrounding Soviet use of force against the Chinese and the effect of that atmosphere on the political-military situation between Moscow and Peking. The Soviet Union would not have moved so quickly and with such confidence against China had the Kremlin believed that the United States would intervene on the side of the Chinese. But it knew with certainty that the United States would not. Not only were Peking and Washington not on speaking terms in 1969-71, but it was a long time after the initial break-through in mid-1971 before China and the United States began to solve their outstanding differences. Of equal significance was American preoccupation with Vietnam; at no time after 1969 was direct American military support of China likely,



given the disturbed state of domestic American politics, the increasing desire to withdraw from Southeast Asia and perhaps from the Pacific as a whole, and the need to shift American attention from Asia to the Middle East and Europe. The Russians knew this and took advantage of it.

Then, too, in the post-1969 period, the Soviet-American strategic nuclear balance was moving toward equality. Even if the United States had wished to aid China by threatening strategic nuclear reprisal against the Russians for pushing the Chinese around, this would have been disastrous since the Soviet Union now had the power to destroy American society. There would be no repetition in the 1970s of the overt nuclear threat elements of coercive diplomacy as practiced during the Cuban missile crisis except where vital American interests might be directly threatened. Moscow realized that, from the strategic nuclear point of view, its concerted buildup after 1962 had successfully isolated its battlefield with China. Concomitantly, the Kremlin counted on the general atmosphere of detente, however ephemeral, and on American desire to preserve at least minimal Soviet-American ties. It would have been unthinkable for the United States suddenly to declare detente at an end merely because of a few military incidents between Communist countries halfway around the globe from the North American continent.

As the Russians had succeeded in neutralizing, through detente, direct American influence on Sino-Soviet military outcomes, much the same was true of Soviet and Chinese links with other Asian states. Moscow had taken care since the early 1960s to repair or strengthen its relations with each of the eight states surrounding China except South Korea. The most obvious examples, aside from North Vietnam, were India and Japan. On the subcontinent, Moscow replaced Washington as the security guarantor of South

Asian international politics. The Tashkent agreement of 1965, the alliance with India in early 1971, and the Bangladesh conflict later that year all demonstrated that Moscow had the ability to influence events decisively in that region. If the relationship with Japan was less felicitous because of the traditional Japanese attitude toward the Soviet Union and Moscow's intransigence over the northern islands issue, the Kremlin was still able to influence Tokyo significantly by enticing the Japanese to participate in Siberian economic development and gain access to its natural resources. Japan therefore thought it prudent to walk a tightrope between China and Moscow (though continuing to take its general policy orientation from the United States). 40/

China, of course, was greatly to blame for its own isolation, for during the Cultural Revolution it had deliberately cut off all contact with every country except Albania. In 1969 Peking faced Soviet threats and guns absolutely alone. The contrast a decade later was stark. China had emerged from its self-imposed isolation, and India and Japan had moved away from Moscow's attempted embrace. The Vietnam War was long over and the United States had regained some freedom of action in world politics. Soviet-American detente had suffered a series of blows and the United States at least was beginning to reduce the military imbalance strategically and in Europe. So Moscow could no longer deal with China entirely as she wished. In the last two publicized border incidents (the intrusion of the Soviet helicopter in 1974 and the military incursion of Soviet forces in mid-1978) Moscow found it necessary to apologize and even to court Peking's favor to gain the release of the imprisoned helicopter crewmen.

In 1971 Moscow pointed out to Peking that the latter's support of its erstwhile South Asian ally, Pakistan, against a Soviet-backed India was

useless. As the Kremlin put it, the Soviet Union "could not be responsible" for what might happen along the Sinkiang-Soviet Central Asian border were the Chinese to send troops against India in response to cries for help from Rawalpindi. By contrast, in 1978 China could threaten to and then actually go to war against Vietnam on its southern flank to protect the remnants of its Cambodian ally, even while continuing to face the Soviet threat from the north. While the contrast between 1971 and 1978 is not perfect and while the linkage between the Southeast Asian and the Sino-Soviet situations was still fraught with danger, China in the late 1970s could afford to behave more aggressively, whereas in 1971, at the height of its troubles with Moscow, it dared not speak or move boldly.

Whatever the balance between short-term benefits and long-term costs to Moscow of its military actions against China, it is clear that emplacing a very strong Soviet force in Siberia and the Soviet Far East has altered the entire balance of power in Asia. Moreover, at the end of the 1970s, it seemed exceedingly unlikely that the Russians would agree to draw that force down to levels approximating those of the mid-1960s. The most important outcome of the change was the mortgaging of Chinese military and foreign policy to deterrence of Soviet threats and defense against Russian invasion. Much of China's internal economic development had to be keyed to producing military equipment, and this had a daily effect on every Chinese.

Other aspects of the balance of power in Northeast Asia were also affected by the Soviet force buildup, including its naval buildup, for the mere presence of these forces close to Korea and Japan altered the military equation. Japan viewed the Soviet Union as its natural enemy and explicitly

justified its rearmanent effort in anti-Soviet terms. On the Korean peninsula, the Soviet naval buildup changed the overall military balance between North and South, 41/ although the separate efforts of China and the United States were directed, respectively, to lessening the degree of Soviet influence in Pyongyang and to stabilizing the local military balance.

In the Taiwan Strait there was and probably would be no military threat from the Chinese mainland against the Republic of China so long as the Sino-Soviet border situation remained tense. In Southeast Asia, the Soviet Union had become a major, if indirect, military power because of its close security ties with Hanoi and its ability to supply military equipment and advisers to the Vietnamese Communists. Finally, in South Asia, even though India had moved into a position of more even balance between the United States, China, and Russia, Soviet military influence remained important, and Soviet involvement in helping to sustain in power a group of pro-Soviet sympathizers in Afghanistan upset the delicate balance on the subcontinent as a whole. 42/

In sum, whereas the Soviet Union was unable to convert its commanding military presence in Northeast Asia into a decisive political and economic influence in the rest of Asia, the Soviet military instrument shaped the Asian balance of power, political and military, if not economic. As in other areas of the world, Moscow found that military power was its most efficient device, and sometimes its only one, for serving its foreign policy goals and applying its overall power from a distance.

American security interests changed accordingly. The defense of Japan against Soviet air and naval threats needed much greater attention. The

United States had to consider more carefully its access to South Korea in case the North rekindled the Korean War. In East and Southeast Asia, Soviet naval forces were much in evidence and it appeared only to be a matter of time before the Russians had a naval base on the Vietnamese coast. American security interests in the Philippines, access to Indonesian oil and Southeast Asian natural resources, rights of passage through the Strait of Molucca, and American naval operations in the Indian Ocean would all be threatened directly by such a base.

On the other hand, American economic interests were probably not affected by the Soviet force in Northeast Asia. On the contrary, the free market economies of Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Malaysia, and to a lesser extent Indonesia and Thailand, flourished despite the Soviet military presence. Indeed, so long as China acted as a bulwark to Soviet influence in Asia, all of these non-centrally planned economies continued to show continued rapid rates of growth and enrichment of their peoples. They have not had to devote an unreasonably high portion of their social and economic product to countering Soviet military threats.

Attitudes toward the United States in Asia and elsewhere were generally unrelated to the Sino-Soviet border conflicts. If anything, world public opinion as well as American public opinion has favored the American opening of relations with China for its own sake, even though some perceived, correctly, that the entire process from the Shanghai communique in 1972 to normalization in 1979 was, among other things, Washington's diplomatic response to the emerging Russian threat against China. While differences remained in the United States as expressed in competing policies and declarations of the

executive and congressional branches about the status and defense of Taiwan after normalization, the American body politic seemed united behind the policy of improving relations with Peking.

This seemingly felicitous situation could change suddenly should the Soviet Union conclude that it was in its interest to bring the conflict with China to a head. While that probability appeared low, some consideration would have to be given to Soviet fears that China, the United States, Japan, Western Europe, and their respective allies were ganging up on Moscow to form a worldwide anti-Soviet coalition. Nothing could be worse from the Soviet Union's point of view. If the Russians concluded that such a trend was inexorable, they might move to forestall it directly by attacking China or indirectly by a military move elsewhere 43/ --an extreme measure designed to break apart such a nearly unbeatable combination before it solidified. But Moscow would be more likely to conclude that Peking needed to be taught that the United States is an unreliable ally, unwilling to come to its assistance (or, for that matter, to that of more closely allied partners) when needed. A series of much more serious and bloody border incidents or the mauling of one or two Chinese divisions in Sinkiang might thus be attractive, if also exceedingly dangerous and provocative. The United States might then be asked by Peking to greatly increase its material support of China, including transfer of much military equipment and military technology. The United States could, it is true, help the Chinese resist the Russians through direct American military action against the Soviet Union, but the probability of that is near zero, in view of the risk of World War III and the destruction of the American homeland.

Suppose the Russians had not used military force at Damansky in 1969

and elsewhere along the border thereafter. Would the USSR have been farther ahead or farther behind, and what of American security interests? It is, of course, impossible to rewrite history, but two things can be said. First, the Russians carefully controlled their use of force against Chinese on all occasions. They had, and for the most part still have, the Chinese at their mercy. 44/ But their actions were much less forcible than their capabilities allowed; instead they were tailored to broader Soviet diplomatic goals in China. It was impossible for Moscow to eschew using military force: that would have shown weakness and forbearance impossible for any ruling group in Moscow, Communist or not. The Russians believe that state borders must be defended at all costs and that most of their actions against the Chinese were for no other reason. If they had reacted to the Chinese with minimal force, however, it would probably have been better for them in the long run, since the Chinese would not have been so thoroughly frightened and would not have aimed every policy act at stopping the perceived Soviet threat. 45/ Minimal Soviet use of force would have been worse for the United States, since the opening with China probably would have been slower and would not have come so far. Moreover, the imbalance of military power in Europe would probably have tilted in Moscow's favor even more and the threat of Soviet invasion would have been made even more believable had Moscow opted for minimal augmentation of its forces in Northeast Asia. 46/

Could the Russians have attained their policy objectives--settlement of the border issue in particular and improvement of Sino-Soviet relations in general--had they not used force? The answer can never be known, of course, but it seems likely that they perceive force as necessary to short-term

goal attainment. Moscow felt it had no other choice, given the seriousness with which it regarded the short- and long-term Chinese threat, a conclusion strongly supported by the emotional Russian attitude toward the Chinese. Moreover, it is important to realize that the Chinese were (and are) impervious to other forms of Soviet influence--economic aid or punishment, offers of compromise on other issues, personal appeals, cultural ties, and so forth. If these had ever been effective policy instruments, they had long since become useless. Force was all that was left to the Russians and force was what they understood and knew how to use best. So they went ahead and used it.

The tragedy for Moscow was--and continues to be--that its use of force did not attain its longer-term goals. Not only did the Chinese not give an inch on the border issue, but they redirected their entire military effort and foreign policy to resisting the Soviet Union. The upshot of a decade's effort was a terrible defeat for Moscow: by 1979, the USSR faced a rapidly strengthening and modernizing China in league with the United States, both of whose leaders seemed united on the necessity to oppose Moscow in most territorial and policy areas where its influence was felt or threatened. Perhaps the Chinese will one day decide that it is better to settle their differences with the Russians, but in 1979 there was no sign of that. The Soviet Union has itself to blame for this state of affairs. Its fault was overreaction to the Chinese, an error typical of its whole foreign policy style, to be sure, but one that could only have led to an impasse between the two Communist giants.



### Footnotes

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2. Tai Song An, The Sino-Soviet Territorial Dispute (Westminster, 1973), chap. 1; and Mark Mancall, Russia and China: Their Diplomatic Relations to 1728 (Harvard University Press, 1971).
3. See Zbigniew Brzezinski, The Soviet Bloc, rev. ed. (Harvard University Press, 1967), pp. 180-84; Donald Zagoria, The Sino-Soviet Conflict, 1956-1961 (Princeton University Press, 1962), chaps. 1-7; David Floyd, Mao Against Khrushchev: A Short History of the Sino-Soviet Conflict (Praeger, 1963); Alexander Dallin, Jonathan Harris, and Gray Hodnett, eds., Diversity in International Communism (Columbia University Press, 1963); William E. Griffith, The Sino-Soviet Rift (MIT Press, 1964); and William E. Griffith, Sino-Soviet Relations, 1964-1965 (MIT Press, 1966).
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5. Yuri Dmitriyev, "Far Away on the Border," Trud (March 16, 1969), p. 3; translated in Current Digest of the Soviet Press (hereafter CDSP), vol. 21 no. 11 (April 2, 1969), p. 4.

6. "Note of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China to the Soviet Embassy in China," New China News Agency (hereafter NCNA), March 3, 1969; Jen-min Jih-pao, March 4, 1969, p. 1; translated in Survey of China Mainland Press (hereafter SCMP), no. 4372 (March 10, 1969), pp. 19-20; NCNA, reporting on border documentary film, April 18, 1969; "Statement of the Government of the People's Republic of China, May 24, 1969," NCNA, May 24, 1969; and "Down With the New Tsars!" Jen-min Jih-pao, March 3, 1969; translated in SCMP, no. 4373 (March 11, 1969), pp. 17-19.

7. Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance (London: ISS), yearly issues 1960-69.

8. Ibid., 1965-69; and John Despres and others, Timely Lessons of History: The Manchurian Model for Soviet Strategy, R-1825-NA (Santa Monica, Calif.: Rand Corp. July 1976).

9. The twenty-year "Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Aid Between the USSR and the MPR" was signed with great fanfare in Ulan Bator on January 16, 1966. It replaced a similar treaty signed in 1946. Text in Pravda, January 18, 1966; translated in CDSP, vol. 18, no. 3 (February 9, 1966), pp. 7-8.

10. New York Times, December 11, 1966; Washington Post, December 11, 1966; Krasnaya Zvezda, January 11, February 15, and March 10, 1967; New York Times, January 21, 1967; Krasnaya Zvezda, July 31, 1968; Dal'niy Vostok, no. 1, 1968; by Harrison Salisbury New York Times, January 3, 1969; Novosti Mongolii, November 11, 1967; Los Angeles Times,

July 10, 1969; New York Times, May 24, 1969; Chiang Yi-San, "Military Affairs of Communist China, 1968," Tsu Kuo, no. 59 (February 1969), pp. 20-36, which quotes Sing-tao Jih-pao, August 3 (p. 2), October 7 (p. 1), and December 9 (p. 3), 1968; Communist China 1967 (Kowloon: Union Research Institutes), pp. 230-31; Japan Times (Tokyo), March 9, 1967; The Economist, March 22, 1969; and Le Monde, April 14, 1969.

11. This section is based on Robinson, "The Sino-Soviet Border Dispute," pp. 1187-90.

12. Later I will discuss the Soviet Union's discovery that its enlarged, powerful border force could serve anti-Chinese policy objectives unrelated to the border question, as in South Asia in 1971 and Southeast Asia in 1978-79.

13. June 10-11: NCNA, June 11, 1969 (translated SCMP, no. 4438 June 12, 1969, pp. 22-23); New York Times, June 12, 1969; Pravda, June 12, 1969 (translated in CDSP, vol. 21, no. 24 July 9, 1969, pp. 9-14) July 8: NCNA, July 9, 1969; New York Times, July 8, 1969; Pravda, July 8, 1969 (as translated in CDSP, vol. 21, no. 28 August 6, 1969, p. 34); Radio Moscow, July 10, 1969 (in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Daily Report--USSR (hereafter FBIS-SU), July 14, 1969, pp. A30-A32 July 20: Pravda, September 11, 1969 (as translated in CDSP, vol. 21, no. 37, (October 8, 1969), pp. 8-10) August 13: Pravda, August 13, 1969 (in CDSP, vol. 21, no. 33 (September 10, 1969), pp. 3-6); New York Times, August 14, 15, 16, 1969; Christian Science Monitor, August 14, 1969; FBIS-SU, August 14, 1969, pp. A1-A4; Izvestiya (and other Soviet sources), August 16, 1969 (in FBIS-SU, August 19, 1969, pp. A21-A25); Tel'man

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14. Tass, Pravda, and Izvestiya, March 30, 1969 (as translated in CDSP, vol. 21, no. 13, April 16, 1969, pp. 3-5, and FBIS-SU, April 1, 1969, pp. A1-A7); FBIS-SU, April 14, 1969, p. A1; CDSP, vol. 21, nos. 23-27, (July 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30, 1969), and FBIS-SU, June 18, 1969; and Pravda, June 14, 1969, (in CDSP, vol. 21, no. 24, July 9, 1969), pp. 9-13.

15. New York Times, September 12 and 13, 1969.

16. New York Times, September 12, 1969, and Le Monde, November 10-11, 1974.

17. FBIS-CC (May 26, 1969), pp. A1-A10, and SCMP, no. 4426 (May 29, 1969), pp. 24-36.

18. See: SCMP, no. 4498 (September 18, 1969), p. 25; Far Eastern Economic Review (September 25, 1969), p. 759; "Statement of the Government of the People's Republic of China," October 7, 1969, in Peking Review, no. 41 (October 10, 1969), pp. 3-4; New York Times, October 8, 1969; "Document of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China," October 8, 1969, in Peking Review, no. 41 (October 10, 1969), pp. 8-15, and SCMP, no. 4517 (October 10, 1969), pp. 30-39. For details of the Soviet and Chinese negotiating strategies from 1969 to 1976, see

Robinson, Sino-Soviet Border Situation, pp. 28-36.

19. Such incidents are vaguely alluded to in the Chinese periodical Li-shih Yen-chiu (Historical Research) of December 1974, and in the Soviet journal Problemye Dal'nogo Vostoka (Problems of the Far East) of January 1975.

20. Daily Telegraph, December 17, 1974; Pravda, December 20, 1974; Reuters and Agence France Presse, December 17, 1974 (in FBIS-PRC, December 18, 1974, p. E2); Tass, December 19, 1974 (in FBIS-SU, December 19, 1974, p. C1).

21. NCNA, January 19, 1974 (in FBIS-PRC, January 23, 1974, pp. A3-A4); New York Times, January 20, 21, and 24, 1974; NCNA (in FBIS-PRC, January 23, 1974, pp. A1-A5 ); Christian Science Monitor, January 25, 1974; NCNA, January 24, 1974 (in FBIS-PRC, January 25, 1974, pp. A1-A2 ); The Economist, January 26, 1974, p. 43.

22. See Pravda, March 21, 1974 (in CDSF, April 17, 1974, p. 3); Peking Review, March 29, 1974, p. 5; New York Times, March 20, 23, and 29, May 3, 6, and 9, 1974; FBIS-SU reporting a wide variety of Soviet sources, March 29, 1974, p. C1, April 5, 1974, pp. C1-C2, April 29, 1974, pp. C1-C2, April 30, 1974, pp. C1-C2, May 3, 1974, pp. C1-C2, May 6, 1974, p. C1, May 7, 1974, pp. C6-C7, May 13, 1974, pp. C1-C10, May 16, 1974, pp. C5-C6, May 23, 1974, pp. C1-C2, June 10, 1974, pp. C1-C2, June 24, 1974, p. C1, June 28, 1974, pp. C1-C2, August 8, 1974, pp. C1-C4, and November 4, 1974, pp. C3-C4; FBIS-PRC, June 24, 1974, p. A4; SCMP, no. April 1-4, 1974, pp. 65-66; The Economist, June 22, 1974, pp. 27-28 ; Daily Telegraph (London), June 26, 1974.

23. Pravda, May 24, 1974, (in CDSI, vol. 26, no. 20, (June 12, 1974), p. 4).

24. NCNA, April 18, 1971 (in FBIS-CC, April 19, 1971, p. 21); and Tass, March 31, 1971.

25. See New York Times, March 29, and April 1, 6, 8, 9, and 10, 1978. See also CDSI, vol. 30, no. 13, (April 26, 1978), pp. 5-10, and no. 14, May 3, 1978, pp. 1-5; FBIS-SU, vol. 3, nos. 61-69, March 29-April 10, 1978, pp. R1, R1, R1-R5, R1-R6, R1, R1, R1-R4, R1-R5, and R1-R5, respectively.

26. Harrison E. Salisbury, "Marco Polo Would Recognize Mao's Sinkiang," New York Times Magazine, November 23, 1969; New York Times, March 3, July 5, and August 16, 1970; Far Eastern Economic Review (January 16, 1971), pp. 46-67; New York Times, August 5, 1973, and January 3, 1974; Tania Jacques, "'Sharqiy Turkestan' or 'Sinkiang'?" Radio Liberty Research, March 7, 1975.

27. This section is based on Robinson, Sino-Soviet Border Situation, pp. 8-31, which in turn was based on a variety of published sources, mostly International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance, 1969-70 to 1977-78, and IISS, Strategic Survey, 1969 to 1977.

28. The Soviet strategic position relative to that of the United States would obviously decline since the Soviet Union would have expended a certain portion of its deployed missile strength, whereas that of the United States would be intact. Moreover, the Soviet system was probably

deficient in accuracy, actual and advertised megatonnage of warheads would differ, misfires would occur, and so on. This would surely result in increased Soviet reluctance to invite a strategic confrontation with the United States until such deficiencies were remedied. A Soviet nuclear attack on China of the scale noted would also probably precipitate an anti-Soviet alliance of all the other major states, which would fear that the Soviet Union might use such weapons against each of them separately and realize that the Russians were not willing to use the ultimate means of destruction in support of their overall policy goals. It would be a classic case of the unification of several strong, relatively unaggressive states against a stronger, more aggressive nation and therefore an attempt to reestablish a stable global balance of power.

29. While the factual basis is slim, it is nonetheless true that all deposed Chinese politicians since 1959 have been accused by the victorious side of advocating compromise with the Soviet Union. This is true of Peng Teh-huai (the former minister of defense), Lo Jui-ch'ing (a former army chief of staff), Yang Cheng-wu (another former army chief of staff), Lin Piao (Mao's erstwhile successor), and the so-called Gang of Four (Mao's closest supporters in the early 1970s). Where there is allegedly smoke, there may be fire. Furthermore, at certain times from 1969 to 1976, during the politics of Maoist succession, it sometimes seemed that military factions might well set up local strong points opposed to the central government, which could have led to open fighting among political-military factions. Finally, since 1971, the Soviet Union

has had the military potential to occupy at least parts of Sinkiang, Inner Mongolia, or Heilungkiang.

30. These include the division between the modern military-oriented sector of the economy and the increasingly less modern agricultural and consumer sectors; the burden on the rest of the economy of the military sector's demands; technological backwardness in the nonmilitary sectors of the economy and unwillingness to adopt the necessary measures to solve the chronic agricultural problem; unrepresentativeness of the younger (post-World War II) generations to the ideological beliefs of the older revolutionaries; growing separation between party and people and unrepresentativeness of the party; local nationalism and religion in the areas of the Soviet Union not part of Great Russia as beliefs competed with Marxism-Leninism and the policy rigidities usually associated with pre-succession periods.

31. The same reasoning seemed to motivate the Russians to remain in contact through negotiations with the United States, principally in SALT II but also in the MBFR talks, the Helsinki human rights talks, and in less critical but symbolic areas such as cultural exchange. In a three-sided game, all participants must constantly fear a deal at their expense made by the other two, and the Soviet Union was not immune to this fear. Moscow also wished to stay in close contact with Washington because the ongoing series of negotiations, especially SALT II, prevented the United States from adopting strong military measures to counter the Soviet buildup.



32. These include Wolfgang Leonhardt, "The Domestic Politics of the New Soviet Foreign Policy," Foreign Affairs (October 1973), pp. 59-74; Roy A. Medvedev, On Soviet Democracy (Norton, 1975); and Alexander Yanov, The Russian New Right (University of California, Institute of International Studies, 1978).

33. Based on a reading of about a thousand articles in the Soviet press, periodicals, and radio broadcast translations between 1969 and 1975, which formed the Soviet data base for Robinson, "The Sino-Soviet Border Dispute" and The Sino-Soviet Border Situation.

34. For speculation on why the Chinese initiated the military activity at Damansky, see Robinson, "The Sino-Soviet Border Dispute," pp. 1190 ff.

35. These charges are detailed in internal Chinese documents published in Michael Y. Kau, The Lin Biao Affair: Power, Politics and Military Coup (Sharpe, 1975).

36. See Edward Luttwak, "Against the China Card," Commentary, vol. 66 (October 1978), pp. 37-44; letters from readers and Luttwak's response, Commentary, vol. 67 (January 1979), pp. 4-8; Seyom Brown, "An End to Grand Strategy," Foreign Policy, no. 32 (Fall 1978), pp. 37-39; Chalmers Johnson, "The New Thrust in China's Foreign Policy," Foreign Affairs, vol. 57 (Fall 1978), pp. 125-37.

37. See the author's "Detente and the Sino-Soviet-U.S. Triangle," in Della W. Sheldon, ed., Dimensions of Detente (Praeger, 1978), pp. 50-83.

38. The linkage between better Sino-American ties and boldness of Chinese actions against the Soviet Union or its allies is graphically demonstrated by the quick Chinese decision to normalize relations with Washington in mid-December 1978 in response to the Soviet-Vietnamese treaty of alliance in November, and by the Chinese invasion of northern Vietnam in February 1979 following the Soviet-assisted Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in January and immediately after Teng Hsiao-p'ing's visit to Washington.

39. The authoritative Soviet statement is contained in the note from Soviet Premier Brezhnev to President Carter of December 22, 1978 (CDSP, vol. 30, no. 51 (January 17, 1979), pp. 2-3); the American verbal assurance is best conveyed by the President's normalization speech of December 15 and the accompanying background briefing (New York Times, December 16, 1978).

40. See Robert Scalapino, ed., The Foreign Policy of Modern Japan (University of California Press, 1977); and Donald C. Hellmann, ed., China and Japan: A New Balance of Power (Heath, 1976).

41. On the one hand, significant augmentation of the Soviet Far Eastern fleet based in Vladivostok, together with a much-strengthened, shore-based naval air arm, materially increased the Russian threat to the American ability to supply the Korean and American military in the South. On the other hand, American naval strength deployed west of Pearl Harbor declined significantly after the end of the Vietnam War, accentuating the Soviet buildup. Were the Soviet Union to interpose its fleet between Japan and Korea or give significant intelligence assistance to the North Korean navy and air force, some American

authorities doubt whether, in the critical first days and weeks of a renewed Korean conflict, American ships could reach South Korea in the requisite numbers.

42. The South Asian political balance traditionally rested on a standoff between India and its supporters, on the one hand, and Pakistan and its friends, on the other. Until the mid-1960s, the United States played the role of balancer and hence security guarantor. Since then, the Soviet Union has played that role, principally as a means of excluding American influence from the subcontinent, and secondarily to counteract Chinese pressure on India. After 1971, however, Pakistan was weakened by the Soviet-Indian-backed Bangladesh struggle for independence, a conflict in which neither China nor the United States was able to support Pakistan. Attention centered on the remnants of Pakistan in the west, since Bangladesh had become an Indian client, and the question was whether Pakistan could find external support sufficiently strong to withstand combined Indian-Soviet political pressure. In this situation the overthrow of the Daoud government in Kabul by leftist forces became critically important, for Soviet influence was then to be found on both sides of an increasingly weak Pakistan.

43. Some examples, aside from direct attack on China, might be enmeshing China in dislocating conflict in Southeast Asia that it could not win; demands that Western Europe demilitarize to a significant extent or face military consequences; or greatly stepped-up Soviet support for radical groups and states in the Middle East and North Africa. While at this writing each of these possibilities seem extreme, they might not

be under the postulated circumstance of American-European-Japanese-Chinese entente.

44. The Soviet strategic military advantage of China may be declining. First, China is likely to continue to gain in disposable military power, including nuclear weaponry. Second, to the extent that the Russians continue to dominate the Chinese militarily, Peking will lean more and more to the American side of the new Soviet-American cold war. Third, even though the Soviet Union may be moving even farther ahead of China in all aspects of modern weaponry, Peking can argue that the growth of its own nuclear forces makes increasing percentages of Soviet territory, population, and industry vulnerable to Chinese missiles.

45. What if the Soviet Union had decided to use much greater force against China? In that case, Soviet security interests would have been threatened to an extreme degree. Not only would the Chinese have declared a holy Maoist "people's war" against the Russian invader, but the United States would in all probability have done all it could to aid the Chinese. That option for the Soviet Union, however, was never seriously considered and remains unlikely.

46. My argument here is contentious, I realize. It depends on the assumption that the Russians would have continued to augment their nuclear and conventional forces at approximately the same rate as they have in the last decade even if they had not had to face a "Chinese threat." It is true that the Soviet Union might not have built up its forces against Europe and the United States to fully replace those

diverted to the Chinese front. On the other hand, the equipment and forces now on the Chinese front would probably have been produced and trained even without the perceived threat from Peking.

## Chapter 3

### THE KOREAN AND VIETNAM WARS

by William Zimmerman

At the outset of the 1970s a Soviet scholar was asked to deliver a paper on Lenin's significance for Latin America. He dutifully began his paper by noting that from Lenin's Complete Works he had ascertained that Lenin not only had never been to Latin America but had had virtually nothing to say about it. Nevertheless, he contended Lenin's ideas and his contribution to the course of revolution were of great relevance to an understanding of Latin America. He then proceeded to comment at great length on this.

My assignment bears a superficial resemblance to the task confronted by the Soviet scholar. This chapter deals with the Soviet use of armed forces for political purposes in the Korean and Vietnam wars. In a narrow sense, Soviet armed forces played virtually no role in either war. I was therefore tempted to dismiss the topic as uninteresting and to pass on to other, more potentially fruitful areas of inquiry. For a number of reasons, however, the temptation was resisted.

First, Soviet personnel did play a role, though a modest one, in both wars. Second, the political purposes of the Soviet Union were served by its having provided its allies with considerable amounts of weapons and some military personnel. Third, the possibility that the involvement of Soviet armed forces would be far greater than it actually was had to be taken into consideration by the states more centrally involved in the fighting. Finally, it is important to determine why the Soviet role was as limited as

it was and what this implies about Soviet goals, priorities, political skill, and propensity for risk taking.

The Korean and Vietnam wars were central events in the post-World War II period. In each war the United States committed hundreds of thousands of troops to deal with military threats thought to emanate wholly or in part from the Soviet Union. (John Kennedy's 1961 meeting with Nikita Khrushchev in Vienna appears to have been an immediate precursor to Kennedy's decision to send 18,000 advisers and support troops to Vietnam, "to make," as Kennedy told James Reston, "our power credible" to the USSR.)<sup>1/</sup> Although direct Soviet participation was minimal, it is necessary to reconsider both the role Soviet armed forces actually did play in these two wars and the implications of Soviet behavior to arrive at an understanding of Soviet foreign policy.

In this chapter I describe the events leading up to and during the two wars and discuss their outcomes. The examination of the Soviet role in the Korean war focuses on two issues. (1) Did the Soviet Union start the Korean War and, if so, what were its motives? Were the North Korean troops merely an extension of the Soviet armed forces serving the political purposes of the Soviet Union? (2) The North Koreans failed in their attempt to unify Korea and were driven back by South Korean and United Nations (almost entirely American) troops to the Yalu and Tumen rivers, the rivers that divide the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) from the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union. From Allen Whiting's work one can be reasonably certain why China crossed the Yalu.<sup>2/</sup> But why did the Soviet Union fail to cross the Tumen? What would have prompted it to use force directly and on a large scale?

Next, I assess the Soviet role in the Vietnam war. Again, the focus is on a few incidents. (1) In the summer of 1964, ostensibly in reaction to attacks on American ships by North Vietnamese patrol boats in the Gulf of Tonkin, the United States bombed North Vietnam. Why did the Soviet Union respond in such a limited way to an attack on a socialist country and what does this imply? (2) A second incident, prompting a more overt Soviet response, occurred several months later. In February 1965 the United States launched a major air attack on North Vietnam. The attack took place immediately after a Vietcong attack on Pleiku in South Vietnam, rather than in response, for instance, to an attack on American military shipping in the South China Sea. Why did Moscow react as it did and what did that indicate about Soviet foreign policy? (3) After Pleiku, the American escalation continued for three years, until 1968, when on March 31 President Lyndon B. Johnson first restricted the bombing of North Vietnam and then in the fall completely halted it. What role did the USSR play in advancing or impeding the various ill-fated efforts to stop the fighting? In the process of escalation and subsequent de-escalation did the Soviet Union compete with the United States in risk-taking? How and to what extent did the Soviet Union use its military might to offset the American escalation? (4) The role of the Soviet Union in the North Vietnamese offensive in the spring of 1972 and its response to the bombing of Hanoi and the mining of Haiphong harbor by the United States, which followed the offensive, are assessed, as are the implications and underlying politics of the May 1972 visit to the USSR by President Richard M. Nixon, a trip that produced manifest anxiety in Hanoi.



### A Synopsis of the Conflicts

The Korean War began on June 25, 1950, when the North Koreans crossed the 38th parallel, which until then had been the demarcation line between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) and the Republic of Korea (South Korea). The Communist takeover in North Korea was similar to that in Eastern Europe. The Soviet Union was bent on creating a state, in the Yalta formula, democratic and friendly to the Soviet Union. As General Terentyi F. Shtykov, the Soviet representative to the Joint American Soviet Commission on Korea, put it in 1946, "The Soviet Union has a keen interest in Korea being a true democracy and an independent country friendly to the Soviet Union, so that in the future it will not become a base for an attack on the Soviet Union."<sup>3/</sup> The USSR used many of the same techniques in consolidating its preeminent position in North Korea as it had in Eastern Europe. Joint stock companies for oil and shipping were created and Soviet advisers were attached to "the Cabinet, the National Planning Council and the Ministry of Defense."<sup>4/</sup> Many of the leaders in post-World War II regimes in Eastern Europe had been Soviet citizens (Marshal Konstantin Rokossovsky was a member of the Polish Central Committee as late as 1956); so, too, in North Korea "Soviet-Koreans"—Soviet citizens of Korean extraction who had lived in the USSR before 1945—occupied important positions in the North Korean government and in the Korean Labor party when the independent Democratic People's Republic of Korea was established in 1948. (Again, as in many Eastern European states, several groupings made up the Korean Labor party: the Soviet-Koreans; Koreans who had been in Yenan with

the Chinese Communist party; the "Kapsan" group, which had conducted guerilla activities against the Japanese; and a "domestic" faction that had remained in Korea during World War II and consequently had close ties with Communists in South Korea.)

The timing of the North Korean attack on South Korea seemed to be related to the drawing of lines between the two blocs that followed the Communist takeovers in Europe and Asia and the burgeoning of the cold war. Specifically, major American spokesmen had demarcated an American defense perimeter that excluded Korea. In 1949 General Douglas MacArthur had implicitly placed South Korea outside the perimeter by defining the U.S. line of defense as extending through the chain of islands near the coast of Asia from the Philippines through the Ryukyu archipelago, Japan, and the Aleutian Islands. In 1950 Secretary of State Dean Acheson spoke of the "'defense perimeter' of the United States in the Pacific" as "including the Aleutians, Japan, the Ryukyus, and the Philippines. . . . So far as the military security of the other areas of the Pacific is concerned, it must be clear that no person can guarantee those areas against military attack."<sup>5/</sup>

Because of the nature of Soviet-North Korean relations and the global emergence of tight bipolarity, the beginning of the Korean War was viewed as a Soviet ploy in the cold war. Western specialists were naturally skeptical of vague Communist assertions that the war was "unleashed by the imperialists" and of the specific North Korean version of the beginning of the war: "Early on the morning of June 25 so-called national defense troops of the puppet government of South Korea initiated a sudden offensive onto

the territory of North Korea all along the line of the 38th parallel [and] . . . invaded the territory of North Korea to a depth of one or two kilometers north of the 38th parallel in the region west of Haiju and the Kunchon and Chorwon regions."<sup>6/</sup> (One observation from a Communist source they found notable, however: "the advantages which an aggressor wins during a sudden attack are well known to everyone."<sup>7/</sup>) Adam Ulam stated the consensus of Western commentary when he declared: "Everything. . . would point to the conclusion that the Korean affair was undertaken at Soviet initiative. That the North Koreans would have attacked on their own is inconceivable."<sup>8/</sup>

At any rate, what happened next is beyond dispute. In the weeks after June 25, the North Koreans advanced rapidly to the south and nearly

pying all Korea. The advance was finally halted in mid-summer by the combined efforts of the South Koreans, the United States, and a small contingent of U.S. allies operating under the aegis of the United Nations. (The legitimating umbrella of the United Nations was made possible by the Soviet Union's boycott of the Security Council meetings in protest over the failure of the United Nations to recognize the credentials of the Chinese Communists as the ruler of China.) In this the American role was obviously paramount. By mid-August 1950 an "observer" was asking in Izvestiya, "Who does not see now that the civil war in Korea would have ended long ago had it not been for American intervention?"<sup>9/</sup>

Events moved rapidly. In September MacArthur undertook a major and daring amphibious action at Inchon, which allowed the American and South Korean armies to extricate themselves from the Pusan perimeter and to

launch a counteroffensive, creating, according to Pravda, a "situation [which] is very serious."<sup>10/</sup> By October the South Koreans had crossed the 38th parallel, taking little notice of Chinese Communist threats to intervene.<sup>11/</sup> Now the United States aspired to unify Korea on its terms. The American ambassador to the UN, Warren Austin, declared: "The opportunities for new acts of aggression should be removed . . . . The aggressor's force should not be permitted to have refuge behind an imaginary line. . . . The artificial barrier which has divided North and South Korea has no basis for existence either in law or reason."<sup>12/</sup>

By mid-October, however, the Chinese "volunteers" had crossed the Yalu, and from October 26 to November 7, they fought South Korean and American forces along a broad front extending west to the coast. By November 27 the Chinese army was heavily engaged in North Korea. Greatly overextended, the American troops retreated rapidly to positions somewhat south of the 38th parallel. Once again the battlefield stabilized; near stalemate existed militarily. From late January 1951 to July 1953 the Americans and South Koreans did achieve modest gains at the expense of the Chinese and North Koreans--notably, they recrossed the 38th parallel across much of the peninsula. Meanwhile, MacArthur was relieved of command by President Truman in 1951, Eisenhower was elected President in 1952, and Stalin died in March 1953. Finally, in July 1953, an armistice was agreed to which resulted in boundaries that essentially restored the prewar condition.

The Vietnam conflict was much longer and more fluid than the Korean War. It might reasonably be called this century's Thirty Years' War. The Vietnamese, under Ho Chi Minh, had waged a guerilla war against the Japanese

in the last months of World War II. Immediately after the war the Vietnamese continued their fight for an independent Communist Vietnam against the French, whose possession Indochina had been before World War II.

The emergence of communism as a powerful force in Vietnam bore little resemblance to the standard pattern of Soviet-dominated takeovers as typified by Eastern Europe and exemplified by the formation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Instead, in 1945-47 Soviet policy in Indochina was premised almost exclusively on Stalin's aspirations for the French Communist party. (The PCF, it will be recalled, was part of the early post-World War II French governmental coalition.) The PCF initially supported the French government's fight against the Vietminh. In 1947 Maurice Thorez, as vice-minister of France, "countersigned the order for military action against the communist-led Republic of Vietnam." Verbal Soviet and PCF support for the Vietminh came only after the PCF had been ousted from the French coalition government and after the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan had been announced in March and June 1947. 13/

The Communist seizure of power in China greatly facilitated Ho's fight against the French since Chinese Communist control of the border between China and Vietnam ensured Vietminh access to weapons and other military equipment. Gradually, the Vietminh prevailed in the fighting, its greatest military victory over the French being the capture of Dienbienphu in 1954.

The withdrawal of the French from Indochina was consummated by the 1954 Geneva conference. Once again, the Vietnamese had reasons to feel that other Communists had strange notions of proletarian internationalism. The Soviet Union urged a cease-fire on the Vietminh largely because its major concern was with Europe, particularly with having the French defeat the

proposed European Defense Community. As summarized in the Pentagon Papers: "Soviet interests dictated the sacrifice of the Vietminh goals if necessary to prevent German remilitarization."<sup>14/</sup> The People's Republic of China similarly allowed concern about its own security to take precedence over Vietminh interests. Peking was anxious to ensure the security of China's southern borders and to delay an American military build-up in Indochina. For Peking, in Marek Thee's words, the "main emphasis was on the prohibition of foreign bases, withdrawal of foreign forces and neutralization of Indochina."<sup>15/</sup>

The 1954 Geneva conference resulted in another country artificially separated by a cease-fire line, in this instance the 17th parallel. The Geneva documentation emphasized the provisional nature of the cease-fire and envisaged that a general election would be held in 1956, to be followed by reunification. The "reality of partition," however, was clear.<sup>16/</sup>

There then followed a brief period in which Hanoi concentrated on the internal economic development of the north rather than on accelerating reunification. By 1960, however, the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam had been created. In the next year or so, "the rate of infiltration from North to South Vietnam increased sharply."<sup>17/</sup> In response partially to this, partially to more general fears of Communist--Chinese and Soviet--commitment to wars of national liberation, the United States began to play a far more active role in South Vietnam. Specifically, President John F. Kennedy approved a Program for Action for South Vietnam, which contemplated "a set of detailed instructions. . . for operations in

the military, economic and psychological fields," including "covert actions in the field of intelligence, unconventional warfare, and political psychological activities." Throughout the next three years, the position of the South Vietnamese regime continued to deteriorate. American decisionmakers contemplated more drastic actions to curb the infiltration from North Vietnam and to bring pressure on Hanoi. In August 1964 the Tonkin Gulf incidents occurred. The United States mounted reprisal air strikes against Hanoi; the Tonkin Gulf resolution was passed by Congress. In October 1964 Khrushchev was removed as head of the party and state in the Soviet Union. In November President Lyndon B. Johnson defeated Barry Goldwater. One of Johnson's central campaign themes was that the United States was "not going north and drop bombs at this stage of the game, and we were not going south and even out and let the Communists take over either."<sup>18/</sup>

But, in fact, the United States was going north. After declining to retaliate for the Vietcong attack on Bienhoa just before the U.S. elections, Johnson in February 1965 ordered the bombing of North Vietnam, ostensibly in response to a Vietcong attack on the American base at Pleiku. American officials were spoiling for an opportunity to enlarge the U.S. role in the war, and Pleiku offered such an opportunity. Townsend Hoopes reports that McGeorge Bundy had noted cynically that "'Pleikus are streetcars,' i.e., if one waits watchfully, they come along."<sup>19/</sup>

The attack on the north, which occurred while Soviet Premier Aleksei Kosygin was in Hanoi, constituted a new phase in the war. As the Pangaton Papers make clear, "By contrast with the earlier Tonkin strikes in August, 1964 which had been presented as a one-time demonstration that North Vietnam

would not attack U.S. forces with impunity, the February 1965 attacks were explicitly linked with the 'larger pattern of aggression' by North Vietnam, and were a reprisal against North Vietnam for an offense committed by the Vietcong in South Vietnam."<sup>20/</sup>

The war intensified in the three years after February 1965. The North Vietnamese and the Vietcong, on the one hand, and the United States and the South Vietnamese, on the other, engaged in a competition of will and commitment. A crucial stage came in early 1968 when, in the aftermath of the Vietcong's Tet offensive, General William Westmoreland requested that the American military contingent of 510,000 men in South Vietnam be augmented by an additional 206,000 troops during 1968. What followed was a thoroughgoing reexamination of the American military position against the backdrop of domestic political crisis, highlighted by Senator Eugene McCarthy's success in the March 12, 1968, New Hampshire primary and Senator Robert Kennedy's announcement on March 16 that he would seek the Democratic presidential nomination. On March 22 President Johnson relieved General Westmoreland of command and made him army chief of staff. On March 25 and 26, the Senior Advisory Group on Vietnam--a distinguished group whose members included Dean Acheson, Omar Bradley, McGeorge Bundy, Douglas Dillon, Arthur Goldberg, Henry Cabot Lodge, Matthew Ridgway, Maxwell Taylor, and Cyrus Vance--set for a stocktaking. As Cyrus Vance, then deputy secretary of defense, remarked, the group was "weighing not only what was happening in Vietnam, but the social and political effects in the United States, the impact on the U.S. economy, the attitude of other nations. The divisiveness in the country was growing with such acuteness that it was threatening to tear the United States apart."<sup>21/</sup>



The reassessment culminated on March 31, when President Johnson announced that there would be a two-stage halt of the bombing of North Vietnam--first at the 20th parallel and later a complete halt--and that he would not "seek," and would not "accept, the nomination of my Party for another term as President."<sup>22/</sup> Four days later the North Vietnamese government declared its "readiness to appoint its representatives to contact the United States representative with a view to determining with the American side the unconditional cessation of United States bombing raids and all other acts of war against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam so that talks may start."<sup>23/</sup>

The "talking while fighting" dragged on until 1972. In the first half of the year, the United States undertook two bold diplomatic moves. President Nixon visited first the People's Republic of China and then the Soviet Union. Hard on the heels of the Nixon visit to China, the military front in South Vietnam changed dramatically. On March 31, precisely four years after Johnson's 1968 bombing-cessation speech, the North Vietnamese army crossed the demilitarized zone en masse. The United States resumed the bombing above the 20th parallel, expanding its attacks on North Vietnam to include the bombing of Hanoi and the mining of Haiphong harbor, actions that did not preclude Nixon's visit to the Soviet Union in May 1972. The presidential visits to China and the Soviet Union were an integral part of the U.S. disengagement from Vietnam and "produced almost immediate results."<sup>24/</sup> Unsure now of the support of its backers, the Soviet Union and China, North Vietnam quickly came to an agreement with the United States and in January 1973 the Paris Agreements on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam were signed. (In the Paris negotiations, it should be stressed, neither the Soviet Union

nor China participated directly. The North Vietnamese had evidently had enough fraternal aid in such matters at Geneva in 1954.) The essentials of the 1954 Geneva agreement—reunification through a general election—were reaffirmed, and provisions were made for the United States to withdraw its remaining troops and for the release of American prisoners of war.

The prewar condition, however, was not restored. "All parties became quite resigned to a military solution . . . . Hanoi rejected all proposals for a continuous cease-fire line, as adopted in the 1954 Geneva agreement. . . . Instead it demanded categorically, and was granted, the 'leopard spot' solution, a cease-fire in place, which favored the guerilla forces."<sup>25/</sup> Two years later, after a brief hiatus during which it appeared that the Republic of Vietnam might solidify its position vis-à-vis the Vietcong (by February 1974 the Vietcong had lost some 15 percent of the territory it controlled at the time of the signing of the peace agreement), the thirty-year quest came to a rapid termination. In early 1975 the North Vietnamese increased their "revolutionary violence" to put pressure on the South Vietnamese government. What followed was "totally unplanned and unexpected": within fifty-five days the Republic of Vietnam and its armed forces disintegrated and surrendered unconditionally. Vietnam was unified.

#### Soviet Armed Forces and the Korean War

In the first months of the Korean War, a majority of the American public thought the United States had entered World War III.<sup>26/</sup> It is difficult to imagine that public opinion polls in the Soviet Union in 1950—had they existed—would have shown that a majority of the Soviet people thought the Soviet Union was in World War III. A central thrust of Soviet foreign policy

in those months was to ensure that the Soviet Union not be involved, at least overtly, in any direct fighting and certainly not in Korea. The main theme of the Soviet media was the Stockholm Peace Appeal, a campaign to obtain the signatures of millions of people opposed to the atomic bomb.

This attitude flies in the face of the two usual explanations of the origin of the Korean War: that Korea was a "testing ground" and that the North Koreans were attempting to "tie down U.S. military strength in Asia so as to reduce resistance to Communist aggression elsewhere."<sup>27</sup> Hindsight, however, makes a simpler, Korean-centered explanation seem the most likely. The North Koreans attacked for a combination of reasons. They gave some credence to the possibility that the South Koreans might attack--hence the attractiveness of a preemptive "do unto others before they do unto you." The unification of Korea could be accomplished solely by Koreans; the North Koreans appear to have convinced themselves and Stalin that Communist guerillas in the South would rise in response to a call from the North. Consequently, the unification could be accomplished quickly. Furthermore, since the affair was to be exclusively a Korean action and since the Americans had excluded Korea from their defense perimeter, there was virtually no risk of American involvement. In short, a North Korean invasion would extend Communist domain through a war in which Soviet armed forces played no direct role and the Soviet Union took no risk.

This is, of course, merely a plausible reconstruction of events, but there is some evidence to bear out the particular propositions above. Syngman Rhee was on record as having said, "We shall respond to the cries of our brothers in distress" in the North. Nikita Khrushchev stated that

Kim Il Sung had assured Stalin that "an internal uprising would occur after the first shots were fired and Syngman Rhee was overthrown."<sup>28/</sup> Kim may well have believed this. After the North Korean attack had failed, Pak Hon-yong, a leading figure among the Korean Communists who had spent World War II in Korea, was charged, in an indictment brought against him by the North Korean Labor party, with having circulated "a false report that in South Korea, the South Korean Labor Party had an underground organization of 500,000 members who were ready to take action in concert with the North."<sup>29/</sup> Certainly Kim made an appeal to South Koreans once the war had begun, urging them "to render active assistance to the People's Army, to expand the national struggle, to destroy the enemy, to disrupt his communications, and restore the people's committees."<sup>30/</sup> Indeed, the North Korean statements of June 10 and June 21, 1950 can be construed as calls to South Korean "patriots" to prepare for an incipient uprising. The interview by Kim Tu Bong, president of the Presidium of the DPRK Supreme People's Assembly, on June 23 is particularly open to such a construction. "As everyone knows," Kim Tu Bong observed,

all the democratic political parties and social organizations of the Southern Half of the Fatherland and all the Korean people . . . have taken every possible step and have exerted their utmost to unify the Fatherland peacefully . . . [There then follows a long list of various unsuccessful proposals.]

More recently on the basis of the aspiration of all of the democratic political parties and social organizations of the Southern half of the Fatherland and all the Korean people, the Presidium

of the Supreme Korean People's Assembly has gone to the extent of directly proposing to the South Korean National Assembly a plan for expediting the peaceful unification of the Fatherland.

However, the Syngman Rhee country-selling traitor gang . . . wants a division of the Fatherland and an internecine civil war instead of the peaceful unification of the Fatherland. . . .

Leading traitors of the Syngman Rhee gang have openly talked about the northern expedition on many occasions. . . . The country-selling traitors may launch their adventurous northern expedition which they are talking about. However, the northern expedition will not be an easy one. . . .

The people of the northern half will launch their struggle vigorously in opposition to the Syngman Rhee traitor gang in order to defend the democratic rights and freedoms and traits of democratic reform which they have won and the people of the Southern Half of the Republic will also rise in unison in the struggle to oppose the Syngman Rhee traitor gang in order to defend the democratic system established in the northern half and to extend it to the southern half. 31/

If this Korean line of argumentation can be sustained, it probably also stands to reason that Khrushchev (certainly not one to shrink from blaming Stalin for misdeeds) is believable when he testifies "that the war wasn't Stalin's idea, but Kim Il Sung's. Kim was the initiator." (Khrushchev quickly adds, "Stalin didn't try to dissuade him . . . . I don't condemn Stalin for encouraging Kim. On the contrary I would have made the same decision . . . had been in his place.") 32/

Whoever originated the idea, Stalin seems to be the one who took steps to further increase the prospects that the Korean attack would succeed, to further minimize the risk to the USSR, and to reduce the likelihood that a Soviet finger would be found on the trigger. Well before the attack, the Soviet Union had been the sole provider of equipment and training for the North Korean army, except for those Korean troops which had been part of the Chinese Communist forces in 1949-50. In April-May 1950 the Soviet Union made large deliveries of tanks, trucks, and heavy artillery to North Korea, presumably in anticipation of the attack.

At the same time, the number of Soviet advisers was reduced. Khrushchev stated it was "absolutely incomprehensible to me why [Stalin] did it, but when Kim Il Sung was preparing for his march, Stalin called back all our advisers who were with the North Korean divisions and regiments, as well as all the advisers who were serving as consultants and helping to build up the army." Robert R. Simmons reports data that bear out Khrushchev's description of the events. "In 1948, there were 150 advisers in each North Korean army division (approximately one per company); in 1949 the number was reduced to 20 per division; by the spring of 1950 there were only between 3 and 8 per division."<sup>33/</sup> He also reports the testimony of an alleged Russian defector who had been in North Korea before the outbreak of the Korean War that the "Soviet Union's military adviser group numbered only 40 before June 25."<sup>34/</sup>

At the outbreak of the war, therefore, there were almost no Soviet forces in Korea, even in the form of advisers—with the probable exception of some Soviet pilots. (Khrushchev states that Soviet "air force planes

were being used to shield Pyongyang and were therefore stationed in North Korea." <sup>35/</sup>) This may have meant some Soviet loss of control over North Korea; one of the strong points in Simmons' sometimes flawed book is the case he makes that the North Koreans jumped the gun by attacking in late June rather than late July or early August. The near absence of its forces certainly reduced the Soviet Union's risk in the short run, and the sizable amount of military aid seemed adequate to achieve the political purpose of Korean unification. At the same time, however, going to such lengths to avoid being implicated in the North Korean attack may have reduced the effectiveness of the Soviet armed forces as a deterrent to U.S. intervention without affecting Western perception of who was responsible for the war.

One of the most intriguing comments issuing from North Korea in the

an article accusing Rhee of having attacked North Korea when he knew full well that "in the final analysis the U.S.A. would be blamed for the situation." <sup>36/</sup> It is ironic that the Soviet Union, by being relatively inconspicuous militarily and by seeming to signal that it would not intervene in Korea, may have made American leaders less fearful that American intervention would prompt a direct Soviet response. Those in the U.S. government charged with monitoring the Soviet press and radio, for instance, were probably not troubled by the threats implicit in a July 2 Pravda editorial stressing the need for even more signatures to the Stockholm Peace Appeal in light of American actions in Korea and in Moscow radio's announcement that the event of greatest significance in the week of June 25-July 2, 1950, was the collection of signatures in the Soviet Union for the Stockholm Peace Appeal. <sup>37/</sup>

The American intervention prevented the attack by the North Korean army, using Soviet arms, from being successful and in a matter of months changed the military situation. As a result, the Soviet Union seemed about to witness the collapse of a socialist state--to be replaced by a pro-American, unified Republic of Korea on its border. It was torn between writing off a bad venture, encouraging the Chinese to intervene, substantially augmenting its overt contribution to the war effort, and reacting to pressure from its ostensibly docile client state, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

#### The Soviet Union Fails to Cross the Tumen

The initial Soviet efforts to regain a modicum of control over the deteriorating situation came in July 1950 and were diplomatic in nature. Stalin responded favorably to Jawaharlal Nehru's mid-July proposal to negotiate an end to the war. The Soviet media in fact went so far as to publish a quotation from the Washington Post characterizing the North Korean action as aggression in order to highlight the USSR's enthusiasm for a settlement. The Washington Post, Izvestiya observed, "admits that 'Stalin would use his influence to end the aggression in South Korea.'"<sup>38/</sup>

Soviet diplomatic moves at this juncture must at best be classified as temporizing. U.S. leaders felt that a minimum condition for a negotiated settlement was a restoration of the prewar status quo, as the Soviet press acknowledged: "The real aspirations of the U.S.A. [are] . . . to create 'realistic conditions' for settlement of the Korean question. These 'realistic conditions' . . . consist of Truman's impending messages to Congress, in which he will request special allocations of dollars and manpower



to make it possible for him 'to carry out his mission to the end.'"<sup>39/</sup>

In fact, the prevailing mood in July 1950 in Washington (though not, for instance, in London) favored an advance beyond the 38th parallel.

George Kennan was, by his account, a member of the minority: "I made it clear as early as July 1950, in the internal discussions of our government, that I was opposed to any advance behind the 38th parallel." In August Kennan stated his belief that a change in the military situation favoring the United States, especially the crossing of the 38th parallel, would produce a Russian response:

When the tide of battle begins to change, the Kremlin will not wait for us to reach the 38th parallel before taking action. When we begin to have military successes, that will be the time to watch out. Anything may then happen--entry of Soviet forces, entry of Chinese Communist forces, new [pressures for a] UN settlement, or all three together. The Russians will not be inclined to sit by if our forces or United Nations forces . . . of any sort push the North Koreans beyond the 38th parallel again. . . . They may . . . reoccupy North Korea, or they might introduce other forces which would be nominally Chinese Communist forces . . . (goodness knows who would be really controlling them). . . . Obviously they are not going to leave the field free for us to sweep up the peninsula and place ourselves forty or fifty miles from Vladivostok. 40/

Kennan was, after a fashion, correct. According to Khrushchev, there was an initial temptation to write off North Korea: "At first, Stalin and

Chou En-lai seemed to conclude it was fruitless for China to intervene."<sup>41/</sup>  
 By late August the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China had agreed that the Chinese would use their troops in Korea if the North Korean position deteriorated further. (Chinese intervention was conditional on U.S. troops crossing the 38th parallel; this act prompted the famous midnight session between Chou and M. K. Panikkar, India's ambassador to the PRC, on October 2. <sup>42/</sup>) Once again, however, as at the outset of the war, Soviet ground forces did not cross the Tumen, even as volunteers--not when ROK forces crossed the 38th parallel on October 1, nor when American troops crossed the parallel on October 7, nor when the South Koreans approached the Yalu and the far north corner of North Korea, nor when the Americans advanced to the Yalu did Soviet troops "reoccupy North Korea." The forces that were introduced were not "nominally" Chinese Communist forces, they were Chinese Communist forces. No Soviet official disturbed Panikkar's sleep in October 1950.

At this point, though, Soviet armed forces demonstrably did play a role. They served in Manchuria to backup Chinese troops and to deter American reprisals against China. The Soviet Union armed the Chinese troops, and Soviet air and antiaircraft forces were directly, if limitedly, involved in the fighting. It appears, moreover, that Chinese participation was conditioned on such Soviet commitments. It was not simply that Mao yielded to Soviet pressure;<sup>43/</sup> rather, it seems that the Soviet Union took several steps that reduced the risk for the Chinese and that these steps were in some way related to the February 14, 1950, Sino-Soviet treaty of alliance. The instruments of ratification for that treaty were exchanged September 30,

1950;<sup>44/</sup> it seems a reasonable assumption that by that date Chinese and Soviet leaders had a fairly explicit understanding of what each country would do in various eventualities. Whiting speculates that the treaty "offered a firm guarantee of all out Russian support should the U.S. attack mainland China in response to PRC intervention in Korea."<sup>45/</sup>

At any rate, the Soviet Union did more in the fall of 1950 than merely provide armaments to go along with Chinese manpower. In fact, Moscow initially provided rather meager amounts of weaponry to the Chinese "volunteers," which has led to speculation that Soviet aid to the Chinese was deliberately inadequate.<sup>46/</sup> Whiting's construction of the chronology makes such speculation seem as if the Vietnam War and the Sino-Soviet split of the 1960s and 1970s were imposed on the Korean War of the early 1950s: the combination of the timing of an agreement, the probable conditions of Chinese involvement, and the necessity for training People's Liberation Army units to handle Soviet weapons probably suffices to explain the Soviet Union's failure to equip the Chinese in any way similar to what it had done for the North Koreans before June 1950.

A reasonably good picture of the extent to which Soviet personnel were involved in the direct conduct of the war has emerged.<sup>47/</sup> If the role of Soviet advisers is ignored, the first clear-cut direct encounter occurred October 8--a day after American troops had crossed the 38th parallel--when two U.S. F-80s strafed a Soviet airfield eighteen miles southwest of Vladivostok and sixty miles north of the Soviet-Korean border.<sup>48/</sup> The first occasion on which Soviet-built MIG-15s were used took place three weeks later when a sizable number of them crossed the Yalu from Manchuria.

The MIG-15 was an infinitely better plane than anything the United States had in Korea until the F86-F Sabre Jet was introduced in 1952; the crack pilots who flew MIGs evidenced a "skill in maneuver [which] argued against their being Chinese in terms of the known capabilities of PLA pilots."<sup>49/</sup>

During the remaining years of the war, several more incidents involved planes with Soviet pilots. In 1952, Futrell notes, "there was no longer any doubt that some of the . . . pilots were Russians. On July 4 a Sabre pilot pulled in close to a stricken MIG and observed that the enemy had a ruddy complexion and bushy eyebrows of light red." In November 1952 "unmarked but obviously Russian MIG-15s swarmed down from Vladivostok. A flight of three Panther jets engaged several MIGs . . . and shot one of them down. At General [Mark] Clark's recommendation, the Joint Chiefs of Staff agreed to make no public disclosure of the Navy's clash with the Russians."<sup>50/</sup>

According to American intelligence estimates, which were accepted by the State Department's Office of Chinese Affairs, there were fifteen Soviet divisions in Manchuria in the fall of 1950 and "about 40,000 Soviet artillery troops 'attired in Chinese Communist uniforms' in the Yangshui Mountain area near Fengcheng."<sup>51/</sup> Soviet writers tell us that "crack" Soviet "air divisions" were sent to the Chinese north-eastern provinces; these "provided dependable air cover against enemy air attacks for the industrial centers in North Eastern China."<sup>52/</sup> According to M. S. Kapitsa, a Soviet diplomat with long experience in Chinese affairs, these Soviet planes "downed dozens of American planes."<sup>53/</sup> And Futrell reports that while "in Mukden a 'Supreme Joint Headquarters' of Chinese and North Korean forces apparently served policy-making and administrative functions for the Communist air forces . . . an 'Allied Joint Headquarters' at Antung

exercised day-by-day control of Red air activities over North Korea. The Antung center appeared to be managed by Chinese Communist officers, but an intelligence informant reported that it was actually run by Russian advisers who were present in the control room at all times.<sup>54/</sup> In short, the Soviet air force was used to increase the cost to Americans, in lives and planes, of violating the Chinese sanctuary, and it probably supervised the air war over North Korea; and Chinese volunteers, acting (as a Soviet scholar recently described it) out of "both internationalist and nationalist considerations,"<sup>55/</sup> ensured that the DPRK would continue to exist. Finally, Kapitsa maintains that the Soviet Union was committed to a bail-out operation in Korea if things got too bad: "In case of a worsening of the situation the USSR was prepared to send five divisions to render aid to the DPRK in rebuffing the aggression."<sup>56/</sup>

In the fall of 1950 the Soviet Union made more explicit its threat to use force to deter further expansion of the war by the United States-United Nations. "There were hot heads [in the United States] who recommended transferring the war onto the territory of the YRC," Kapitsa writes. "The USA could not but reckon on the presence of the mighty Sino-Soviet alliance."<sup>57/</sup> He quite properly points to President Harry S. Truman's Memoirs as evidence that Truman was deterred: Truman believed that the United States must expect a Soviet response if it attacked China.

Thus the Soviet Union, by its actions, direct and threatened, helped set limits on the Korean conflict. Apparently it was committed to using its troops if necessary to avert certain outcomes. It was anxious to keep the United States out of northeastern China. Had American troops gone across the Yalu to China, Soviet troops would have crossed the Amur in force.

Stalin was evidently willing to sacrifice some Russian lives to reduce the danger that North Korea would collapse. After the front in Korea had been stabilized, the Soviet Union reintroduced enough military personnel into North Korea to affect the waging and the outcome of the war at very little risk to itself since the United States was no longer disposed to seek total victory in Korea. By September 1951, according to U.S. intelligence estimates, 20,000 to 25,000 Soviet troops were in North Korea, including roughly 5,000 ground air troops, a 5,000-man artillery division, 2,000 military advisers, and 1,500 engineers.<sup>58/</sup> The effect was to reinforce the American disposition to settle for the restoration of the prewar status quo. Since the United was deterred by its clash with the Chinese when American forces had approached the Yalu, there was almost no risk to Soviet security in implanting troops in North Korea after the front had stabilized. Moscow also seems to have understood the distinction between crossing a border to fight the United States to prevent the United States from unifying Korea and placing Soviet troops in North Korea to increase the cost and risk to the United States of an attempt to unify Korea. The former risk--the risk the Chinese took--Moscow might not have been willing to take, Kapitsa notwithstanding, had the Chinese intervention failed to prevent the UN forces from unifying Korea, even if it meant the collapse of a socialist country and a pro-American Korea on the Soviet border. The latter risk--analogous to placing American troops in Berlin as hostages--Moscow was willing to, and did, take. Ultimately, therefore, Soviet troops did cross the Tumen but only after the Chinese had crossed the Yalu, when the prospects that the war might again come close to the Soviet border had become remote.

Patron-Client Bargaining and Soviet Support for North Korea

Although the Soviet Union rendered a modicum of aid to the People's Republic of China and to the DPRK, there is much in the open record to suggest that it was determined to avoid entanglement in the conflict if at all possible, but that the North Koreans mounted a vigorous campaign in the fall of 1950 to persuade the Soviet Union to increase its support of them. On October 19, while the North Koreans were fleeing north and after the Chinese had begun to cross the Yalu, Kim Il Sung made a rather striking broadcast. He began by saying, "The Korean people . . . receiving absolute support from the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China and all democracies and progressives of the world." What is striking are the two examples given of such absolute support:

One of the examples for the world wide support to the Korean people is the medical mission from Hungary. Another support comes from the Chinese people; we, the Korean people will never forget the warm support of the Chinese people delivered by the People's Delegation on the occasion of the second anniversary of our Republic. Premier Chou En-lai also declared that China cannot remain indifferent at the invasion of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. 59/

Doubtless some listeners wondered whether Kim had intentionally omitted a Soviet example.

If so, it might have been partly a result of the chilly letter he had received from Stalin a week before in response to a fawning cable sent by Kim. (In mid-October 1950 North Korean leaders were unlikely to have stood on ceremony.) The cable from Kim had stated in part:

The Korean people are ardently grateful for the U.S.S.R.'s constant, friendly support of our people in the struggle for the unification and independence of our motherland.

Thanks to the disinterested aid shown us by the U.S.S.R. in accord with the agreement on economic and cultural cooperation concluded in March, 1950, between the two countries, the Korean people have achieved huge success in the development of our Republic.

The U.S.S.R.'s foreign policy, which invariably fights for democracy, freedom and the independence of large and small nations, is strengthening in our people the belief in a triumphant conclusion to the sacred war of liberation against the American interventionists and their lackey--the treacherous Syngman Rhee clique.

We know that in this war the support and sympathy of the peace-loving nations of the whole world by the great U.S.S.R., are on the side of people. 60/

Stalin's response was terse at best and probably rude. It was addressed to Mister (gospodin)--not Comrade--Kim Il Sung. After thanking Kim for the "kind sentiments and good wishes" he had conveyed, Stalin stated: "I wish the Korean people, heroically defending the independence of their country, a successful conclusion to their struggle of many years' duration for the creation of a united, independent and democratic Korea." 61/ Utterances such as these have generated, over the years, cynicism about the Soviet commitment to proletarian internationalism.

There were further pointed remarks from the Soviet side. On October 31, 1950, broadcasting from Khabarovsk in Korean, Soviet radio took the occasion to describe to its listeners what was happening in Vietnam.



At a time when the North Koreans desperately needed Soviet aid, one can readily imagine how discomfoting it was for the North Koreans, their backs against the Yalu, to hear the conclusion of the Soviet broadcast:

The Vietnam People's Army has made the imperialist American and French rulers angry. The imperialist American Government has announced that they are going to send planes, tanks, cannons, and other equipment from Korea to the Vietnam French forces. They are going to set up a second brutal action in Vietnam and they are disturbed by the Vietnam people's victory. The People's Army victory has struck a blow against the imperialist American and French colonialists.

All of the democratic nations support and sympathize with the Vietnam people's forces. 62/

Remarks such as these must have made the North Koreans rather nervous  
ness of Soviet support. On the anniversary of the  
.. revolution, the North Korean leaders were probably trying to reassure  
themselves as much as their supporters. In a commentary bravely titled  
"The Victory of the Great Socialist Revolution of Russia Is a Victory in the  
Campaign for the Liberation of Small Nations," they noted that "the Korean  
people were liberated from the colonial yoke of the Japan bandits through  
the precious blood shed by the brave officers and men of the Soviet Armed  
Forces. Today the American imperialists are making every effort to deprive  
us of the happiness gained at the cost of the blood of the Soviet people."  
Consequently, the North Koreans asked, "How could the great Soviet people

... and peace loving peoples of the world sit back and do nothing about the brutal atrocities of the American imperialists, who are bent on aggression in Korea?"<sup>63/</sup>

The Soviet Union, it turned out, was going to do something (and the PRC much more). The degree of commitment and of risk would be carefully controlled; certainly Soviet leaders were not going to be pressured either by the North Koreans into extensive and risky support of North Korea or by anyone<sup>64/</sup> into diversionary actions elsewhere that might prompt a vigorous response from the United States. By its unwillingness to risk its own forces in June 1950, the Soviet Union had contributed to the failure of the North Korean effort to unify Korea—a failure that had threatened the existence of the North Korean regime. Still, there was little point in compounding the blunder, which at least entailed no risk for the Soviet Union, by putting Soviet troops on the line in the fall of 1950 at very great risk. Far better to take a chance on the survival of the DPRK—after all, the Americans were already on the Soviet borders in Iran and Turkey—and to use Soviet armed force in more efficacious and less risky ways as a deterrent in China and ultimately as a deterrent in North Korea well removed from the battle.

Soviet Armed Forces and the Vietnam War

The relevant events preceding the Soviet responses to U.S. reprisals against North Vietnam for the Tonkin Gulf incidents (August 1964) and the Vietcong's attack on Pleiku (February 1965) date back to 1960-61. In those years Sino-Soviet doctrinal differences about national liberation wars became manifest, first at the 1960 meeting of the eighty-one Communist parties and then in Nikita Khrushchev's famous January 1961 Kommunist article. Khrushchev's position was that Soviet nuclear might was sufficient to deter the "export of counter-revolution," and that revolution in individual countries could therefore proceed apace without interference from the outside. Fearful of the risks of escalation, Khrushchev put forth a plausible and attractive rationalization for a policy that did not involve large amounts of military aid--much less large deployments of Soviet troops abroad--to foreign Communists engaged in waging national liberation wars--namely, the Vietnamese.

At the same time, however, the Soviet Union had become modestly involved in Indochina, specifically in Laos, where Soviet transport aircraft flew almost 200 missions in the last half of December 1960. 65/ This spilled over into South Vietnam: "In the spring of 1961, Soviet transports began airlifting military supplies to Tchepong, a town twenty miles from the Vietnam border in eastern Laos believed to be a major base of operations for the Vietcong." 66/

-- Where the Soviet Union did not play a significant role in 1960-63 was in providing military assistance to North Vietnam. Rosser states

that the North Vietnamese specifically asked the Soviet Union for increased military assistance and that this produced a worsening of Soviet-Vietnamese relations. 67/ The occasion for the Soviet evaluation of the request, his argument runs, was December 1962, when General Pavel Batov, chief of staff of the Warsaw Pact countries, visited North Vietnam. During a January 1963 visit, party secretary Yuri V. Andropov delivered the rejection of the request. The timing of the North Vietnamese request was presumably not propitious: in the aftermath of the October 1962 Cuban missile crisis and the Sino-Indian border clash, there was little disposition in Moscow to encourage adventurism.

In any event, Soviet-Vietnamese relations worsened in 1963-64, and Vietnamese ties with the PRC improved. The North Vietnamese were consequently not counting on Soviet support should the United States decide to escalate its role in Vietnam to one involving overt operations, bombings in particular, against North Vietnam. In February 1964 it seemed likely that the United States would decide to undertake such measures. The Vietnamese assessment of Soviet policy seems to have been well founded, even though Moscow's response to the increasing evidence of a propensity in Washington to escalate the war conveyed a willingness to assist North Vietnam if the United States should attack: on February 25, 1964, in a statement by Tass, the Soviet Union promised to render the Vietnamese national liberation struggle the "necessary assistance and support" and declared that "the Soviet people cannot remain indifferent to escalatory events in Vietnam." 68/

But the Vietnamese media conveyed the distinct impression that the Soviet Union was proffering such "necessary assistance" if the United States attacked, not as a deterrent to such an attack; that the North Vietnamese were much less confident of Soviet nuclear strength as a deterrent to the United States than were Soviet leaders; and that Soviet assistance came with too many strings--Moscow, in particular, appears to have insisted that Vietnam side with the USSR against the PRC. In a June 1964 article in Hoc Tap Vice Premier Pham Hung insisted that "to insure the defense capability of the socialist camp it is imperative to strengthen the defense capability of all socialist countries and not just one country" and criticized potential donors for employing aid "as means of compelling others to abandon their independent political stand." 69/

The record indicates that the North Vietnamese knew whereof they spoke. In 1964 the importance the USSR attached to Southeast Asia, never high, seemed to dwindle still further. Soviet deliveries of all kinds to North Vietnam decreased substantially--this in a year when Hoc Tap was affirming that "support for the international revolutionary movement by the countries in which socialism has achieved victory should cover all fields" 70/ --from 51 million rubles in 1963 to 42.5 million rubles in 1964, the difference being largely accounted for by an 8-million-ruble "reduction in deliveries in machinery and equipment (from 30.6 to 22.3 million)." 71/ And in June 1964 Khrushchev was prepared to have the USSR resign as cochairman of the permanent body of the International Control Commission for Laos and evidently to extricate the USSR from Indochina. 72/

Despite these intimations, the Soviet Union did continue to accord Vietnam limited support. As Khrushchev said in July 1964, "we have more than once warned" the United States not to act as a "world gendarme" and "we support the people of South Vietnam" who "have every right to engage in any armed struggle . . . a sacred struggle for their freedom and independence." 73/

It is against this background that the Soviet reaction to U.S. actions against North Vietnam after the Tonkin Gulf incidents can be best understood: consonant with recent practice, the reaction was modest, vague, and verbal. A Tass statement of August 6 declared that "authoritative Soviet circles resolutely condemn the aggressive actions of the U.S.A.," characterized the incident as one that might result in "dangerous intensification of the already tense situation," and asserted that "such actions, or further imprudent steps or provocations in this area can cause events capable of turning the incidents which have taken place into a widespread military conflict with all the dangerous consequences ensuing therefrom." 74/ Two days later, on August 8, Khrushchev characterized the American actions as "aggressive" and "piratical." The operative paragraphs, however, contained little specific commitment. "'Madmen' and 'semi-madmen' and other people, normal and abnormal" were warned. "The peoples," Khrushchev declared, " . . . are fighting and will continue to fight for their independence":

Should the imperialists thrust a war upon the socialist countries, the people of the Soviet Union will carry out their sacred duty . . . . The Soviet Union today has enormous military strength at its disposal and by relying on it we are able to labor and create in peace.

Directing all its forces into communist construction, the Soviet Union is following the behests of the great Lenin and is pursuing the sole correct path. 75/

Peking Review, rarely one to miss a trick, noted dryly that "neither the Tass statement nor that of Khrushchov [sic] referred to giving support to the just struggle of the D.R.V. against U.S. aggression." <sup>76/</sup>

Two months after Tonkin, Nikita Khrushchev was a pensioner. His long-time associates, Leonid Brezhnev and Aleksei Kosygin, were first secretary (later general secretary) of the CPSU and chairman of the Council of Ministers, respectively. The assertion that Khrushchev's ouster produced a change in Soviet behavior cannot be explicitly substantiated. Khrushchev might well have reacted to events--specifically, to the obvious indications in Washington after the election that the United States was moving toward a major escalation in Vietnam--as his successors did. Substantial documentation exists to suggest that in the months before and after Khrushchev's ouster Soviet audiences were being prepared for a major reconciliation between the United States and the Soviet Union. <sup>77/</sup> Much of the motivation, moreover, that apparently prompted a change in Soviet policy toward North Vietnam was characteristic of Khrushchev's policy as well: confidence that a political solution would ultimately produce a Communist victory in South Vietnam, interest in extricating the United States from Vietnam so that the USSR and the United States could address other problems, a desire to maintain some presence in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam as a counter to China. <sup>78/</sup> At the same time, the new leaders probably perceived themselves as being under greater pressure than Khrushchev to demonstrate that the Soviet Union still supported revolutionary causes globally; and they were probably less fearful than Khrushchev that a modest American-Soviet confrontation in Vietnam would escalate.

What is clear is that there was a shift in Soviet signals toward the end of 1964. Tass on November 27 used the same phrases it had used in February--

"cannot remain indifferent" and "render necessary assistance"--but it differed in that it expressed concern about "the fate of a fraternal socialist country."<sup>79/</sup> Kosygin informed the Supreme Soviet in December that the USSR "will not remain indifferent" and declared it "is prepared to give. . . the necessary assistance, if the aggressors dare raise a hand against" the DRV,<sup>80/</sup> a commitment conveyed that month by Brezhnev and Aleksandr Shelepin as well. Finally, on December 30, Andrei Gromyko affirmed Soviet arms assistance if "the aggressors dare to infringe upon [the DRV's] independence and sovereignty" and invoked "the principles of proletarian internationalism."<sup>81/</sup>

Evidence of the new Soviet leadership's intention to align its money and its mouth came in February as Kosygin headed a Soviet delegation to Hanoi whose main mission, presumably, was to concretize increased Soviet economic and military assistance. Plans by the United States to undertake reprisals against North Vietnam were delayed in deference to Kosygin's visit for three reasons. First, it was feared that the reprisals "could be interpreted," the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff wrote, "as a reaction to [the] visit, thereby impairing and complicating U.S.-Soviet relations." Second, American leaders had "the hope, if not expectation, that Kosygin would from the U.S. point of view, weigh in constructively in the Vietnam struggle" Third, "the Soviet Union [was] the only alternative source of economic and military support to Hanoi" other than China.<sup>82/</sup> However, on February 7, the day after Kosygin's arrival in Hanoi, the Vietcong--in what was probably a deliberate provocation--attacked the U.S. barracks at Pleiku and a helicopter base at nearby Camp Holloway. The Americans, who were itching for an opportunity to launch Operation Flaming Dart, proceeded to bomb the southern regions of the DRV during Kosygin's visit.



The overt Soviet reaction, while restrained, was considerably more specific than it had been at any time in 1964. Kosygin, in a speech in Hanoi on February 9, continued to use such phrases as "necessary assistance" and to assert that "peace is an ally of socialism." He explained that during his trip "ways will be outlined for the future expansion of cooperation along economic, political, ~~cultural~~, and other lines." <sup>83/</sup> The Soviet government in Pravda made explicit the operative definition of "other" on February 9:

"In the face of the above mentioned actions by the U.S.A., the Soviet Union, together with its allies and friends, will be forced to take further measures to guard the security and strengthen the defense capacity of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Let no one have any doubts that the Soviet Union will do this, that the Soviet people will fulfill their internationalist duty with respect to a fraternal socialist country." <sup>84/</sup>

In mid-1964, the Soviet Union was on the verge of extricating itself from Southeast Asia. Soviet military advisers were playing a decreasing role in Indochina generally and in Vietnam especially. Soviet military personnel in Vietnam (although I have no explicit figures from open sources) must have numbered well under a thousand. Weapons transfers were being reduced, and the Soviet effort to deter the United States relied on noncredible hortatory remarks and the Soviet nuclear arsenal.

According to the Chinese (and they are apparently correct), the Soviet leaders set out in January-February 1965 to use their military aid to get some control over events in Vietnam. They "have ulterior motives in giving a certain amount of aid--they are trying to hoodwink the people at home and abroad, to keep the situation in Vietnam under their control, to gain a say on the

Vietnam question and to strike a bargain with U.S. imperialism on it."<sup>85/</sup>

The bargain evidently entailed a negotiated settlement that would (as Kossygin is supposed to have told the Chinese when he passed through Peking on his visit to North Vietnam, in February 1965), help the United States "find a way out of Vietnam."<sup>86/</sup> and at the same time reactivate the Sino-Soviet alliance. Instead, Pleiku produced a situation in which the USSR found itself using its armed forces for political purposes--on a far more modest and less risky scale than the United States, to be sure--paralleling one of the U.S. reasons for intervention in Vietnam. The USSR, that is, felt it had to demonstrate the credibility of its commitment--that it was a "strong" and "reliable" friend of small socialist states.<sup>87/</sup> In this instance, the small socialist state may have manipulated the Soviet Union so that Soviet military power served the political purposes of the smaller state as much as those of the Soviet Union. Bipolarity among socialist states may have created a straddle point at which small (socialist) states could encourage the great (socialist) powers to compete in providing war materiel, some power enhanced deterrent capabilities.

After February 1965 the bombing of North Vietnam became a central feature of the general effort by the Americans to stop "the Communist aggression" rather than a tit-for-tat response to particular incidents. The American escalation--U.S. troops in South Vietnam and increased air strikes--continued until March 1968. The war itself dragged on for the United States until January 1973, although the United States gradually disengaged itself after President Johnson's March 31, 1968, speech. The Soviet contribution to the North Vietnamese war effort by and large paralleled that of the United States

to South Vietnam but on a much smaller scale, involving far less risk-taking than U.S. actions but representing roughly two-thirds of the total foreign assistance to North Vietnam.

Focusing on Soviet media utterances makes it readily apparent that Moscow was intent on convincing external and domestic audiences that the Soviet Union would match the United States step for step--though, to repeat, Soviet leaders preferred to climb shorter steps. In 1964 Moscow's themes had been that "it would not remain indifferent" and that it would take "necessary measures" (unspecified). In 1965-67 it stated that it was taking "practical measures . . . to strengthen the security and build up the defense capability" of the DRV or, in Brezhnev's words, "real support."<sup>88/</sup> Such phrases were generally coupled with declarations that the USSR would compete

States by matching U.S. escalation. "The Soviet Union is . . . the Democratic Republic of Vietnam whatever assistance it needs . . . . We have not been and will not be found wanting in this regard."<sup>89/</sup> "The Soviet Union has given and will continue to give fraternal Vietnam its full political support and the necessary economic and military aid" (Dmitri S. Polyansky).<sup>90/</sup> "The Soviet Union has given, is giving, and will continue to give the Vietnamese people all round support and aid" (Supreme Soviet).<sup>91/</sup> "The U.S. ruling circles must realize that new steps to expand the war will inevitably call forth correspondingly more efforts by the Vietnamese people and the countries friendly to them. . . . The Soviet Union has given and will give all-round aid" (Nikolai Podgorny).<sup>92/</sup>

There was some indication, moreover, that there was a kind of competition in risk-taking going on among the Soviet elite, which relates to

differences in opinion about whether the U.S. actions in Vietnam were part of an overall confrontation between the forces of imperialism and revolution or a relatively separable phenomenon. For those like Shelepin and Marshal Rodion Malinovsky, both of whom characterized the United States as "worse than Hitler," the war in Vietnam was not an isolated event but evidence that the United States confronted Soviet interests in revolution in every corner of the globe. However, the core political leadership--Brezhnev, Kosygin, Podgorny--spoke as though they regarded Vietnam as a more or less isolated event. One evidence of this difference in view showed up in late 1966 when Izvestiya censored a speech by Shelepin in such a way as to bring his position more in line with the prevailing Soviet stance. The speech as published by Red Star (the army newspaper) describes the worsening international situation in 1966 as a consequence of a general confrontation of imperialist and revolutionary forces:

As a result of the intensification of the aggressive schemes of the imperialists, a serious aggravation of the world situation has taken place. World reaction, headed by the main force of war and aggression--American imperialism--now here, now there kindles the hotbeds of conflict. The imperialists in a number of regions are striving to restore by force the colonial order, to stifle the national liberation movement of the people. The U.S.A. has been waging for several years now a plundering, colonial war against the peoples of Vietnam. 93/

Izvestiya, on the other hand, by omitting the italicized words in the above text, seemed to suggest that the primary reason for the aggravated

international situation was the war in Vietnam. Whether Vietnam was a relatively separable problem or a clash of the forces of imperialism and revolution led to some differences in policy formulation by Soviet leaders about the magnitude of future commitments to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Shelepin declared in August 1965 that the Soviet Union would provide "necessary and ever-increasing assistance"<sup>94/</sup> to the DRV at a time when others in the leadership were merely pledging the support deemed necessary.

It certainly was the case that non-Soviet Communist elite groups were willing to let the Soviet Union take greater risks. The Chinese responded to Soviet criticism about difficulties in transshipping aid across China by pointing out that "besides ground and air communications there are sea routes to link various countries in the world."<sup>95/</sup> The Cubans similarly had the indelicacy to use the occasion of the CPSU's Twenty-Third Congress in 1966 to advise the Soviet leadership:

Considering the situation that has arisen in connection with the war in Vietnam, it is necessary to establish a military force capable of stopping the bombings of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, that is, capable of putting the American planes that bomb Vietnamese territory out of action. For victory over imperialism in Vietnam, it is of decisive importance, using all available means and taking the necessary risk, to halt the criminal aggression, which is what the bombing of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam constitutes. It is necessary to make the utmost effort and to render decisive assistance in order to turn the territory of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam into a "graveyard of American aircraft." <sup>96/</sup>

While in general the speech of the Cuban delegate, Armando Hart Devalos, was enthusiastically received by the Soviet Congress audience, his advice on risk-taking and rendering sufficient antiaircraft aid to deter U.S. B-52s received no applause. (No B-52s were shot down until December 1972.)

The Vietnamese, however, did receive other forms of military aid, including antiaircraft missiles, batteries, and planes, as the Soviet leadership made plausible its argument that fidelity to proletarian internationalism (read: countering the Chinese challenge) consisted in providing concrete assistance--in which the USSR naturally had a comparative advantage--not ideological fervor. Table 1 summarizes the estimates of the International Institute for Strategic Studies of Soviet and Chinese military aid to Vietnam from 1965 to 1971. The Soviet figures were apparently derived from the official exchange rate, which at that time was one ruble to \$1.11; in other IISS calculations, Soviet defense expenditures are estimated at 0.40-0.50 ruble to one dollar, implying that the figures should be doubled. (The usual estimate of U.S. expenditures for the Vietnam War is about \$112 billion.)

As early as April 5, 1965, U.S. intelligence found evidence of the first SA-2 SAM site under construction. According to the Pentagon Papers, "the SAM's were only the most dramatic form of considerably increased quantities of modern military equipment beginning to be furnished to the DRV by the Soviet Union."<sup>97/</sup> MIG-17s were sighted in June 1965.<sup>98/</sup> In April 1966 the first announced use of MIG-21s occurred in the war,<sup>99/</sup> and in May Soviet "Shyster" missiles with a range of 750 miles--Saigon and Hanoi are

Table 1. Soviet and Chinese Military Aid to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam  
Millions of U.S. dollars

Year	USSR	China
1965	210	60
1966	360	95
1967	505	145
1968	209	100
1969	120	105
1970	75	90
1971	100	75
Total	1,660	670

Source: International Institute for Strategic Studies, Strategic Survey, 1972 (London: IISS, 1972), p. 50.

roughly 700 miles apart--were reported as having been seen by neutral observers in the Hanoi area.<sup>100/</sup> By summer 1966 the Soviet Union was publicizing its role in training Vietnamese pilots to fly the MIG-21s.<sup>101/</sup> By fall American intelligence was estimating the presence of 130 SAM sites in North Vietnam<sup>102/</sup> and disagreeing about whether there were 5,000 or 7,000 antiaircraft batteries in North Vietnam. "One highly placed [U.S.] source" described the Vietnamese defense as "the most advanced that American pilots have ever faced.

Indications are the system will be further elaborated and strengthened."<sup>103/</sup>

Soviet military personnel were also made available. In March 1965 Brezhnev even floated the possibility of Soviet volunteers going to Vietnam: "Our central agencies are receiving many declarations from Soviet people

expressing readiness to take part in the Vietnamese people's struggle for freedom and independence."<sup>104/</sup> In April 1965 a carefully phrased Soviet-North Vietnamese declaration was issued which declared: "The Soviet government, if needed be and if the DRV government so requests, will give its consent to the departure for Vietnam of Soviet citizens who, guided by a sense of proletarian internationalism, have expressed the desire to fight for the just cause of the Vietnamese people."<sup>105/</sup> (The Chinese in March 1965 charged that "the Soviet leaders proposed that China permit transit of 4,000 army personnel to Vietnam without first obtaining her [Vietnam's] consent" and that China should let the Soviet Union "occupy and use one or two airfields in Southwestern China and station a Soviet armed force of 500 men there."<sup>106/</sup>

Exactly how many Soviet military and civilian advisers were in Vietnam is impossible to determine. Za rubezhom in December 1968 reported that about 3,000 experts were helping "in various fields of the national economy and the defense of Vietnam";<sup>107/</sup> but estimates for 1968-72 by the International Institute of Strategic Studies in Military Balance use the figure 1,000 (versus 21,000 in Egypt according to Heikal) as the number of Soviet military personnel in Vietnam.<sup>108/</sup> Whatever the number, they played an important part in managing SAM sites, especially, it seems, in 1965-66. (Presumably, North Vietnamese cadres later played a larger part.) Max Frankel reported in August 1965 that "from radio interceptions, ground espionage, aerial reconnaissance and deductions from other known facts, most, if not all, the missiles are believed to be under Soviet management."<sup>109/</sup>

Initially, Soviet sources, as part of a tacit agreement between Moscow and Washington, gave no indication that Soviet citizens were playing an active



role, but in October 1966 Krasnaya Zvezda, the Red Army newspaper, described the putative advisory role Soviet missile specialists were playing under fire. American military intelligence sources, however, asserted that "Soviet advisers were helping the North Vietnamese to coordinate the radio network that ties the antiaircraft system together under a central command."<sup>110/</sup> Whatever their exact role, it is difficult not to conclude that Soviet military personnel were in North Vietnam and actively involved in ground-to-air combat against the United States in the three years from February 1965 until the bombing halt in 1968.

The central purpose of the Soviet involvement in the escalation seems to have been straightforward: to deter the United States from actions that would threaten the DRV's existence and to prevent the United States from attacking Hanoi and Haiphong--that limited goal the USSR could achieve with 1,000-3,000 Soviet personnel. There can be no doubt that the USSR had some success in deterring U.S. actions. The Pentagon Papers, for instance, are replete with evidence that concern about the possible Soviet response to U.S. escalatory steps affected American calculations and resulted in options being precluded and forces being deployed in less than optimal ways.<sup>111/</sup>

The deterrent role of the Soviet armed forces was created in several ways. Obviously, American cost estimates were influenced. More subtly, by making public in the Soviet media such actions as the presence of Soviet technicians at missile sites, Moscow made its commitment manifest by yielding the initiative and leaving the choices to U.S. leaders, who could easily imagine the possible consequences of killing dozens or hundreds of Soviet

citizens. (A similar hostage role was played, evidently deliberately, by the Soviet merchant marine in Haiphong harbor.)

The biggest political gain the Soviet Union derived from its assistance to the DRV stemmed from the DRV leaders' open expressions of gratitude--which were quite appropriate since Soviet (and Chinese) aid more than offset the damage done to the DRV by the United States. This praise blunted the effectiveness of Chinese attacks on the USSR for "revisionism" and "collusion" with the United States, and allowed Moscow to claim correctly that a socialist country which really was advancing the revolution appreciated the assistance being rendered by the fraternal Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union made gains such as these at low risk and low cost. A large number of possible actions were never undertaken and, I suspect, never seriously entertained; there was no apparent disposition, for instance, to open a second front despite--or because of--Chinese pressure. A few highly visible low-cost actions were taken to show displeasure with American policy in Vietnam. (One such incident was the canceling of a Soviet-American track meet. The USSR ultimately reimbursed the Americans for revenue losses suffered.) Much of Soviet-American relations during the Vietnam War could be described as business as usual.

In war it is not necessarily true that what goes up must come down. In Vietnam, though, the level of the war did decrease after President Johnson halted the bombing north of the 20th parallel in March 1968. "Fighting while talking" was the pattern for four years. In 1972, however, Nixon's visits to China in February and to Moscow in May set in motion events that brought about an end to the war. As Adam Ulam remarks, "The Chinese trip. . . accomplished

what was undoubtedly in Washington leaders' minds its main objectives: An invitation to Moscow with its sequels, a prospect of a compromise settlement in Vietnam, and a number of important agreements between the United States and the USSR." 112/

North Vietnamese leaders were made uneasy by these events. Once again, as in 1954, the possibility loomed that the great powers might act in concert and undermine Vietnamese interests. The DRV's response was to launch a major attack directly across the anachronistically labeled demilitarized zone, which in turn prompted heavy U.S. bombing of North Vietnam. This time the United States bombed Hanoi and bombed and mined Haiphong. With a great deal at stake, the issue again was what role the Soviet armed forces would and did play.

It is doubtful, first of all, that Moscow encouraged the DRV to launch its attack across the boundary separating North and South Vietnam. Certainly there is no evidence for this of which I am aware. But several things are clear. The weapons, particularly the tanks, used by the North Vietnamese were primarily Soviet in origin. Moscow's overt response to American protests about its role in arming the North Vietnamese was scornful: V. Kudriavtsev, writing in Izvestiya observed:

The U.S.A. complains that the Vietnamese patriots are now "using heavy military equipment in battle," "blames" the Soviet Union for this, and uses this to "justify" the bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong. It is understandable that the American warriors would like it if their B-52 heavy bombers

were opposed only by Vietnamese with rifles in their hands. It is even easier to fight against unarmed old men, women and children. [The Vietnamese Provisional Revolutionary Government], naturally and rightfully, sees to it that its fighting men, who are defending freedom, are well and effectively armed. 113/

Moreover, the North Vietnamese were equipped with much more modern weapons than they had been in 1965-68 and had enormous stockpiles of SA-2 missiles. "According to U.S. sources, 1,600 of the latter were fired against U.S. aircraft between April and July." "During the spring of 1972, two new missiles began to appear in the North and with the National Liberation Front in South Vietnam. These were the Sagger wire guided anti-tank missiles, and the shoulder-fired SA-7 Strela surface-to-air missile . . . which appears to have been highly effective against helicopters."114/ Finally, in this vein, the Soviet leadership was sufficiently concerned about North Vietnam's anxiety about the forthcoming Nixon visit to Moscow to dispatch a delegation headed by CPSU Secretary Konstantin Katushev, "in accordance with an agreement reached earlier," to discuss "the further development and strengthening of Soviet-Vietnamese relations as well as certain questions of mutual interest."115/

At the same time Soviet leaders were not so concerned about events in Vietnam or the attitudes of the North Vietnamese leaders as to let the bombing of Hanoi or the bombing and mining of Haiphong harbor—or for that matter the damage to some Soviet merchant ships and the injuries to members of their crews—stand in the way of Nixon's visit to the USSR. The immediate

Soviet response was almost entirely verbal. Moscow did resupply North Vietnam, with the result that in December 1972, when the last U.S. bombing spasm occurred, the North Vietnamese succeeded in downing B-52s for the first time in the war. Moreover, the American blockade and mining produced "the first Soviet naval reaction in the long history of U.S. operation in Southeast Asia." Submarines and six surface warships including a Sverdlov-class cruiser sailed "at a relatively slow transit speed" from Vladivostok to a place "some 300 miles from the principal operations of U.S. carriers." While Soviet intelligence-collection ships--which previously had often been present at U.S. naval activities off Vietnam--sailed among the American ships, the Soviet "reaction force remained at a distance of 300 miles until . . . in late June 1972."<sup>116/</sup> In general, however, Soviet behavior

in which minor wars on the periphery of Asia were peripheral as well to the strategy of those in Moscow calling the shots. To Soviet Politburo member Pyotr Shelest (who may have shared with East Germany's Walter Ulbricht a preference for rapprochement with China rather than improved East-West relations, and whose position as first secretary of the Ukraine probably disposed him to emphasize the development of coal rather than natural gas and oil) the idea of having Richard Nixon come to Moscow (and Kiev) immediately after the mining and blockade of Haiphong and the bombing of Hanoi may have been abhorrent--it probably was.<sup>117/</sup> (Shelest was removed from his post as first secretary of the Ukraine on May 25, the day before Nixon arrived in Kiev.) To Brezhnev and Kosygin, however, progress in the SALT negotiations and the prospect of explicit recognition that the Soviet Union's strategic forces had achieved parity with those of the United

States, the prospect of a burgeoning trade with the United States, including American investment in the development of natural gas and oil deposits in Siberia, and the fear that the Nixon visit to Peking in February 1972 might lead to an adverse shift in the global distribution of power were far too important for them to show squeamishness about American behavior in Vietnam.

### Conclusions

Superficially, the Korean and Vietnam wars have much in common. The actors were similar: the fighting involved the United States and a vigorously anti-Communist client state, on the one hand, and on the other, a Communist state bent on forcibly unifying the country. Though these wars are often portrayed as major episodes in the Soviet-American cold war, no direct confrontation of any scale between the United States and the Soviet Union took place. The locations were similar: each war took place on the periphery of Asia in countries bordering on China. Each war was limited. No nuclear weapons were used. Sanctuaries relevant to the delivery of military supplies were generally observed. No efforts were made to interfere with the shipment of weapons and material before their arrival in the country for which they were destined. Diversionary moves were not initiated elsewhere as a means of inhibiting the involvement of one or another state. Each war was terminated through a long process of talking while fighting. The Korean truce negotiations dragged on for two years; in Vietnam (where everything took longer) the negotiations lasted more than four years.

On the whole, however, the differences were more significant. The outcomes of the two wars were certainly different. The Korean War ended with the essential restoration of the status quo ante and seemed to establish the

proposition that "export of revolution" across state boundaries would be countered by U.S. military action. The Vietnam War ended in the unification of the country under Communist leadership. In the process the point most clearly established seems to have been that a small state fighting a total war has considerable advantage over a superpower engaged in a war for limited goals. Other differences in the context and conduct of the war helped make more likely the particular, and different, outcomes. Far fewer viewed the United States' actions in Vietnam as legitimate than did its actions in Korea; the Rhee government in Korea was more capable of governing than the South Vietnamese governments; the jungles of Vietnam provided a physical environment conducive to guerilla warfare; and the Vietcong was a much more effective force than the South Korean Communist guerillas. Another difference between the style and conduct of the two wars arose from the simple fact that the Vietnam War took place (largely) after the Korean War, in which both the United States and the PRC had learned some lessons. The United States was much more mindful of Chinese signals and concern than it had been during the Korean War.<sup>118/</sup> Also, it is worth remembering that the Soviet Union neither borders on Vietnam nor played a significant part in the founding of North Vietnam (whereas in North Korea the Soviet Union's role was crucial). Finally, in the Korean War the relation between the United States, China, and the USSR had been almost entirely a bipolar one between the United States and "the Sino-Soviet bloc," whereas the Vietnam War was fought against the backdrop of the Sino-Soviet split, which produced, to use the title of Donald Zagoria's book, a Vietnam Triangle.

One area where the similarities outweighed the differences however, is the focus of this study: Soviet use of armed force as a political instrument. In Korea and Vietnam the Soviet Union provided the socialist state with weapons

in support of that state's efforts to unify its two-state nation by force. One failed, the other succeeded. In both wars the Soviet leadership was disposed to let others do the fighting. The actual use of Soviet troops--as opposed to Soviet weapons--was quite restricted. In each instance only a few thousand Soviet troops were involved and they were employed primarily to deter and defend a socialist state against American bombing. (In the last months of the Korean war the number of Soviet troops in Korea may have reached 20,000.) In both Korea and Vietnam, the Soviet use of armed forces was, to use a phrase that gained some currency in the initial phase of U.S. involvement in Vietnam, largely "covert and deniable." Even when Soviet accounts described Soviet involvement in Vietnam, Soviet leaders could always maintain that their missile specialists were not actually involved in the fighting but were merely training the Vietnamese. What stands out in boldest relief is that, even when an effort was being made to extend Communist power by force, the actions of the Soviet Union were quite limited and entailed low risk.

In this chapter I have concentrated on what actually happened. An awareness of the general Soviet propensity for low-risk undertakings is, however, probably heightened by reflecting on a number of instances in which advocated alternative courses of action were not pursued. At the outset of the Korean War, for instance, no Soviet troops were used, and Stalin had actually reduced their number in Korea before the war began. Khrushchev argued that with "one Soviet tank corps, or two at the most,"<sup>119/</sup> the North Koreans would have gone all the way to Pusan before the United States could have responded. Khrushchev's policy might have worked. Stalin, to his credit,



presumably understood the risk to the USSR of such a Soviet commitment; if the United States intervened and actually fought one or two Soviet tank corps, the prospects for escalation would be great indeed. In this instance the old refrain "Emu vidnee"--"It's clearer to him [Stalin]"--seems appropriate. Similarly, in the fall of 1950, the North Koreans apparently pressed the Soviet Union for greater aid than they actually received. Again, more aid would have helped North Korea attain its goals but at a risk to the Soviet Union that Stalin evidently considered unacceptable. There is nothing to suggest that the USSR under Stalin was ever disposed to provoke incidents elsewhere in an effort to weaken the U.S. capacity to act effectively in Korea, even though there is an occasional hint that the Chinese hoped for such moves.

In Vietnam, Khrushchev--his bluster about Stalin's behavior in Korea notwithstanding--pursued a policy of minimum commitment in 1963-64. As in Korea, the Soviet Union was reluctant to respond favorably to requests from a small ally for greater support in the conduct of the war. Instead the Soviet leadership under Khrushchev proposed to provide the requested support only on conditions that, in effect, required the North Vietnamese to divorce themselves from China. Although some shift in Soviet policy was detected after the October 1964 ouster of Khrushchev, only after the direct bombing of North Vietnam while Premier Kosygin was in Hanoi did Moscow furnish more support and reduce its conditions for that support. Throughout the years 1965-72 the USSR increased its support of North Vietnam as the United States increased its outlay for the war effort. The Soviet contribution, however, though of substantial assistance to the DRV, was minuscule compared with American expenditure on the war. Soviet assistance to Vietnam also fell

short of that sought or advocated by those, inside and outside the Soviet Union, who demanded a direct confrontation with the United States and a willingness to take risks. In Vietnam, as in Korea, the Soviet Union was not disposed to provoke incidents elsewhere in order to "tie down" American imperialism. No effort was made to interfere with American delivery of materials or men or to interdict the U.S. Navy's actions even during the bombing of Hanoi and the mining of Haiphong. These incidents did not even delay Nixon's visit to the Soviet Union, a course one presumes that Shelest and others advocated. Regardless of the many differences between Stalin, Khrushchev, and Brezhnev, all three in their decisions rejected the blandishments of those prone to greater Soviet risk-taking and greater willingness to use Soviet forces for political purposes. Brezhnev and Kosygin in 1972, moreover, made it as obvious as had Khrushchev in 1964 that improved relations with the United States were considerably more important than developments in Vietnam.

Despite the many similarities in the Soviet use of armed force in Korea and Vietnam, it is true that in one instance a Communist state, North Vietnam, succeeded in unifying the country, and in the other, a Communist state, North Korea, failed in the effort. Moreover, Soviet-North Korean relations more nearly approximated our image of modal Soviet-satellite relations than did Soviet-North Vietnamese relations. In drawing up a balance sheet on the effectiveness of the Soviet use of its armed forces as a political instrument, should it be concluded that the Soviet Union was more effective in Vietnam than in Korea? The foregoing summary of the differences between the two wars suggests the need for caution. The situations were

radically different, and it does not necessarily follow that the divergent results are an indication of greater Soviet effectiveness in the Vietnam War than in the Korean War. Moreover, the part played by the USSR in both wars was sufficiently modest to raise doubt about whether the outcome of the wars is a reasonable indicator of the effectiveness of the Soviet use of force.

It might be better to evaluate effectiveness as the enhancement of state interests as some function of that state's resources expended. Viewed this way, the extremely modest role of Soviet armed forces in the two wars may be evidence of the effectiveness of the Soviet use of force for political purposes. If a state can get other states to do its fighting for it, after all, in a certain sense it is being almost optimally effective.

In Korea, for instance, there was a possibility that by merely providing weapons and limited air support the Soviet Union had done enough for the North Koreans to unify Korea. Placing Soviet troops in Manchuria as a deterrent to American attack in exchange for having Chinese troops prevent the United States from unifying Korea represents an impressively effective use of Soviet armed force. Introducing Soviet troops into North Korea after the Americans had been driven back to the 38th parallel was also an effective political use of the troops--as a hostage. Although these troops never engaged American forces, their presence ensured the continuation of socialism in North Korea by increasing the likelihood that the United States would not make a second attempt to go north.

In Vietnam, the USSR's use of force was also highly effective in some respects. The Soviet Union--and the People's Republic of China--substantially affected the conduct of the war because of American perception of what help

would be given to North Vietnam if the United States took certain courses of action. It is difficult not to regard the Soviet provision of North Vietnam with weapons and "advisers" as having served its purpose. The Soviet Union's limited contribution to the North Vietnamese war effort did affect the outcome of the war. With almost no cost in Soviet lives, an expenditure by the USSR of at most one-thirtieth the annual amount of U.S. outlays in Vietnam went a long way toward offsetting the U.S. contribution. What, in short, several of the above examples suggest is the relevance to Soviet foreign policy of some old verities about the use of armed force for political purposes: its use is more likely to be effective in denying an opponent something than in coercing him to do something specific; and force is most effectively applied when it is not actually used.

A wider perspective on the effectiveness of Soviet actions in Korea and Vietnam produces additional insights. The reaction of the other actors in the Korean War forces a correction in the assessment of the Soviet use of armed forces as a political instrument. The Soviet effort to appear uninvolved, at the very beginning of the war, increased the likelihood that the United States would intervene and hence that the North Korean adventure would fail. The Soviet Union, nevertheless, did not succeed in persuading non-Communist leaders that it was not responsible for the North Korean invasion. As a result, the North Korean action made it possible for the U.S. administration to persuade Congress that an enormous increase in American military spending was necessary to counter the Soviet threat, and this greatly expanded the global military capabilities of the United States. And it appears that, if the Chinese had failed to stop the United States in

North Korea in the fall of 1950, the Soviet Union might have acquiesced in the reunification of Korea rather than cross the Tumen to engage American forces. Certainly, despite North Korean pressure, the USSR set limits on the aid it would provide. The Soviet reluctance to engage in risk-taking and the modesty of the commitment forced the North Koreans to rely much more on their own devices. In an important sense, therefore, the Korean War and the Soviet use of force therein has to be seen as an important stimulus not only to the rearming of the United States but also to the emergence of a non-satellite North Korea with a deliberately self-reliant ideology.

In Vietnam, the reaction of the other actors in the conflict affects but does not diminish one's view of the effectiveness with which the Soviet Union used its armed forces for political purposes. Soviet behavior had a significant effect on U.S. foreign policy. It may reasonably be speculated that, as Soviet support of Vietnam increased after 1965, the willingness of the United States to play the China card also increased. North Vietnam, in turn, had cause to appreciate both the importance and the fragility of Soviet support for its cause. Nevertheless, the results of the Vietnam War--the unification of Vietnam and the strengthened ties of socialist Vietnam with the Soviet Union--probably have reassured the Soviet elite about the wisdom of its course in Vietnam. The low-risk policy of a measured response to American acts was doubtless considered a success, which probably reinforced the Soviet Union's belief that it could engage profitably in other low-risk efforts on the periphery of Europe while continuing to attach primacy to the superpower relationship.

Footnotes

1. As reported in David Halberstam, The Best and the Brightest (Fawcett, 1973), p. 97.
2. Allen S. Whiting, China Crosses the Yalu: The Decision to Enter the Korean War (Stanford University Press, 1960).
3. New York Times, March 21, 1946, as cited in Robert R. Simmons, The Strained Alliance: Peking, Pyongyang, Moscow and the Politics of The Korean Civil War (Free Press, 1975), p. 21.
4. Whiting, China Crosses the Yalu, p. 42.
5. Ibid., p. 39.
6. Declaration of Ministry of Internal Affairs of People's Democratic Republic of Korea, as reported in Pravda, June 26, 1950, translated in the Current Digest of the Soviet Press [CDSP], vol. 2, no. 22 (July 15, 1950), p. 12.
7. Literaturnaya Gazeta, August 31, 1950, as translated in CDSP, vol. 2, no. 35 (October 14, 1950), p. 13.
8. Adam B. Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence: Soviet Foreign Policy, 1917-73, 2nd Ed., (Praeger, 1974), p. 518.
9. Izvestiya, August 20, 1950, as translated in CDSP, vol. 2, no. 34 (October 7, 1950), p. 22.
10. Sergei Borzenko, "Battle for Seoul," Pravda, September 23, 1950, as translated in CDSP, vol. 2, no. 37 (October 28, 1950), p. 13.
11. Whiting, China Crosses the Yalu, p. 111.
12. As reported in ibid. As early as August 17, Austin had declared: "The United Nations must see that the people of Korea attain complete individual and political freedom. . . . Shall only a part of this country be assured this freedom? I think not." Ibid., p. 78; Whiting's italics deleted.

13. Donald S. Zagoria, Vietnam Triangle: Moscow, Peking, Hanoi (Pegasus, 1967), pp. 37, 38.
14. The Pentagon Papers: The Defense Department History of United States Decisionmaking on Vietnam, Senator Gravel edition (Beacon Press, 1971), vol. 1, p. 168.
15. Marek Thee, "The Indochina Wars: Great Power Involvement-- Escalation and Disengagement," Journal of Peace Research, vol. 13, no. 2 (1976), p. 123.
16. Ibid.
17. Geoffrey Jukes, The Soviet Union in Asia (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1973), p. 218.
18. New York Times, September 29, 1964.  
Townsend Hoopes, The Limits of Intervention (McKay, 1969), p. 30.  
on Papers, vol. 3, p. 271. Italics in original deleted.
21. Hoopes, Limits of Intervention, pp. 215-16.
22. New York Times, April 1, 1968.
23. Pentagon Papers, vol. 4, pp. 602-63.
24. Thee, "The Indochina Wars," p. 125.
25. Ibid., p. 126.
26. Kenneth N. Waltz, "Electoral Punishment and Foreign Policy Crises," in James N. Rosenau, ed., Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy (Free Press, 1967), p. 229.
27. Whiting, China Creates the Yalu, p. 41. Whiting reports both these explanations as unsubstantiated by events.
28. Simmons, Strained Alliance, p. 115.

29. "The North Korean Labor Party's Internal Factions," published anonymously in the Japanese publication Jiyu and reproduced in Simmons, Strained Alliance, p. 109.

30. As reported in Pravda, June 27, 1950, and translated in CDSP, vol. 2, no. 22 (July 15, 1950), p. 14.

31. As reported in Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), Daily Report, Supplement Korea, no. 124 (June 27, 1950), p. PPP11, Emphasis added.

32. Nikita S. Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers (Little, Brown, 1971), p. 370.

33. Simmons, Strained Alliance, p. 120, drawing from North Korea: A Case Study in the Techniques of Takeover (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1961), p. 114.

34. Simmons, Strained Alliance, p. 120, citing Kyril Kalinov, "How Russia Built the North Korean People's Army," The Reporter (September 26, 1950), pp. 4-6. Robert F. Futrell, The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953 (Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1961), p. 92, reports that U.S. Air Force intelligence thought it likely that Soviet instructor pilots participated in the initial phase of the war in Korea.

35. Generally, Stalin's penchant for control was as strong in the Korean case as elsewhere. Gasoline supplies, for instance, were reportedly kept down to one-month levels with reserves kept in the USSR, according to Whiting, China Crosses the Yalu, p. 43. This may have affected North Korea's chances of success, at least after the initial blitzkrieg had failed, inasmuch as it left the DPRK short of bullets and other materiel.

36. At least this is what Izvestiya reported the North Korean newspaper Minch'u Choson as having said. Izvestiya, August 1, 1950, as reported in CDSP, vol. 2, no. 31 (September 16, 1950), p. 15.



37. The Pravda editorial (which was monitored by FBIS, Daily Report, no. 128 [July 3, 1950], p. AA16) read: "The Soviet people brand with indignation the open act of aggression committed by the American Government against Korea. All the peoples of the USSR, says the resolution of the plenary session of the Soviet Committee of Peace, have always warmly supported and are still supporting the efforts of the organized front of Peace Partisans aimed at the furthering of the cause of peace and against the incendiaries of a new war." The same issue of the Daily Report (pp. AA23-24) includes a Soviet Home Service report that "the most important event which has had great influence on the international situation during the last week is the collection of signatures for the Stockholm Peace Appeal which has started in the Soviet Union. This campaign for the collection of signatures in the Soviet Union links the ranks of the supporters of peace still more closely and is yet another telling blow against the warmongers' plans and their anti-Soviet propaganda. They no longer limit themselves to preparations for aggression. They have committed direct acts of aggression. And in this connection I want to continue with the second international event. I have in mind the events in Korea."

38. Article signed, "Reviewer," Pravda, July 23, 1950, as translated in CDSP, vol. 2, no. 30 (September 9, 1950), p. 6. Emphasis added.

39. Pravda, "Reviewer," July 23, 1950. The internal quotations purportedly from an Agence France Presse correspondent.

40. George F. Kennan, Memoirs: 1950-1963 (Little, Brown, 1972), pp. 23-24.

41. Khrushchev Remembers, p. 371. Khrushchev did not witness the encounter between Stalin and Chou; rather, the Politburo seems to have been briefed.

42. Whiting, China Crosses the Yalu, pp. 108-09.

43. Vladimir Petrov, "The Soviets and World Communism," in O. B. Borisov and B. T. Koloskov, Soviet-Chinese Relations, 1945-70 (Indiana University Press, 1975), p. 28.

44. Simmons, Strained Alliance, p. 158.

45. Whiting, China Crosses the Yalu, p. 90.

46. Simmons, Strained Alliance, p. 181.

47. It should be stressed that "Soviet personnel" and "Korean troops" are not completely exclusive categories. "Soviet Russian" and "DPRK Korean" are physically distinguishable but Soviet Koreans in the sense of, first, an ethnic Korean citizen of the Soviet Union and, second, a former Soviet citizen of Korean extraction who had become a Korean citizen are not.

48. The Soviet version of this incident is contained in the protest of the Soviet government that appeared in Pravda, October 10, 1950, and in the New York Times on the same day. The United States acknowledged later that the incident had taken place as a result of "navigation error and poor judgment" and informed the United Nations that the "commander of the Air Force group concerned [has] been relieved and appropriate steps have been taken with a view toward disciplinary action against the two pilots involved." New York Times, October 20, 1950.

49. Whiting, China Crosses the Yalu, p. 135.

50. Putrell, United States Air Force in Korea, pp. 477, 567.

51. U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950, vol. 7: Korea (GPO, 1976), p. 1025.

52. Borisov and Koloskov, Soviet-Chinese Relations, p. 71.
53. Mikhail S. Kapitsa, KNR: dva desiatiletia-dve politiki (Moscow: Politizdat, 1969), p. 36.
54. Futrell, United States Air Force in Korea, p. 370.
55. Personal conversation.
56. KNR, pp. 36-37.
57. Ibid., pp. 38-39.
58. Simons, Strained Alliance, p. 202.
59. FBIS, Daily Report, no. 205 (October 20, 1950), pp. BB1, BBB1.
60. Pravda, October 12, 1950, as translated in COSP, vol. 2, no. 38 (November 4, 1950), pp. 21, 55.
61. Ibid., p. 55.
62. FNIS, Daily Report, no. 215 (November 3, 1950), p. CC5. Emphasis added. According to a defector, Vice Minister of Defense Kim Il "had complained about Soviet unwillingness to supply more planes, which had rendered North Korea defenseless against American bombing." Joungwon A. Kim, Divided Korea: The Politics of Development, 1945-1972 (Harvard University Press, 1975), p. 178.
63. FBIS, Daily Report, Supplement Korea, no. 220 (November 6, 1950), p. PPP14. Emphasis added.
64. The Chinese may have wondered why Moscow did not undertake such a move. For instance, a November 21, 1950 broadcast from Peking quoted Omar Bradley as having said the United States was "left without an adequate margin of military strength with which to face the enemy at any other specific point." FBIS, Daily Report, no. 228 (November 22, 1950), p. AAA1.

65. Zagoria, Vietnam Triangle, p. 42.

66. Richard Rosser, "The Soviets and Vietnam: A Tragic Miscalculation?"

South Atlantic Quarterly, vol. 72 (Summer 1973), p. 392.

67. Ibid., p. 393.

68. Pravda, February 26, 1964.

69. As reported in New York Times, June 6, 1964.

70. Ibid.

71. Jukes, Soviet Union in Asia, p. 218.

72. Zagoria, Vietnam Triangle, p. 43. Zagoria also reports that Pravda on July 7, 1964, warned that should the Soviet Union's call for an international conference on Laos be received negatively by other states this "would place the Soviet government in a position in which it will feel compelled to review the question in general of whether the Soviet Union can carry out its functions as co-chairman."

73. Pravda, July 9, 1964, translated as in CDSP, vol. 16, no. 28 (August 5, 1964), p. 4.

74. Pravda, August 6, 1964, as translated in CDSP, vol. 16, no. 32 (September 2, 1964), p. 26.

75. Pravda, August 9, 1964, as translated in CDSP, vol. 16, no. 33 (September 9, 1964), pp. 11, 12. The careful reader will have noted that the last two paragraphs in the text are probably best read as a reaffirmation of the previous Soviet position and a skillful rebuttal to critics: that the USSR's deterrent capacity was adequate, and there would be no increase in military aid to North Vietnam; and that the Soviet Union was directing "all its forces into communist construction"—"the sole correct path."

76. Peking Review, no. 33 (1964), p. 27. The New York Times, which has been known to miss a trick, headlined its report of Khrushchev's speech, "Khrushchev would go to war for Hanoi."
77. In particular AN SSSR, Dvizhushchie sily vneshnei politiki SShA (Moscow: Nauka, 1965).
78. The new leaders differed from Khrushchev in that they were willing to attempt to repair relations with China.
79. Pravda, November 28, 1964. Pentagon Papers, vol. 3, p. 266, indicates that there was "a reported Soviet pledge in November to increase economic and military aid to North Vietnam."
80. Pravda, December 10, 1964, as translated in CDSP, vol. 16, no. 49 (December 30, 1964), p. 12.
81. Pravda, January 5, 1965, as translated in CDSP, vol. 17, no. 1 (January 27, 1965), p. 22.
82. Pentagon Papers, vol. 3, pp. 301, 302.
83. Pravda, February 9, 1965, as translated in CDSP, vol. 17, no. 6 (March 3, 1965), pp. 5, 6.
84. Ibid., p. 7.
85. Peking Review, no. 46 (1965), p. 16.
86. Ibid., p. 15.
87. Pravda, February 9, 1965, as translated in CDSP, vol. 17, no. 6 (March 3, 1965), p. 7. Emphasis added.
88. E. Primakov, Pravda, March 15, 1965, as translated in CDSP, vol. 16, no. 11 (April 7, 1965), p. 23; and Brezhnev's speech in Warsaw Pravda, April 9, 1965, as translated in CDSP, vol. 17, no. 14 (April 28, 1965), p. 11.

89. Pravda, April 9, 1965, as translated in CDSP, vol. 17, no. 14 (April 28, 1965), p. 11.
90. Pravda, November 7, 1965, as translated in CDSP, vol. 17, no. 44 (November 24, 1965), p. 7.
91. Pravda, December 10, 1965, as translated in CDSP, vol. 17, no. 51 (January 12, 1966), p. 7.
92. Pravda, March 10, 1967, as translated in CDSP, vol. 19, no. 10 (March 29, 1967), p. 4.
93. Krasnaya Zvezda and Izvestiya, December 10, 1966. Emphasis added.
94. Pravda, August 18, 1965, as translated in CDSP, vol. 17, no. 33 (September 8, 1965), p. 8.
95. Peking Review, no. 19 (1965), p. 26. In fact, the USSR after 1967 used the sea as the major means of conveying its aid to Vietnam.
96. Pravda, April 2, 1966, as translated in CDSP, vol. 18, no. 15 (May 4, 1966), p. 19. The author happened to be in the Soviet Union during the Twenty-third Congress. I will remember a conversation with a specialist in the Institute of World Economics and Statistics during which I was asked whether I had read what that "lunatic Cuban" had said at the Twenty-third Congress.
97. Pentagon Papers, vol. 3, p. 365.
98. New York Times, June 25, 1965. I do not know whether these were Soviet or Chinese built.
99. Ibid., April 25, 1966. "Air Force officials" were reported as not knowing "to whom the MIG 21s belonged although they presumed the fighters were North Vietnamese Air Force planes."

100. Ibid., May 20, 1966, reporting an article appearing in Aviation Week and Space Technology.
101. Pravda, August 28, 1966, as translated in CDSP, vol. 18, no. 35 (September 21, 1966), p. 20. See also New York Times, August 29 and 30, 1966.
102. New York Times, October 4, 1966.
103. Ibid., September 28, 1966.
104. Pravda, March 24, 1965, as translated in CDSP, vol. 17, no. 12 (April 14, 1965), p. 16.
105. Pravda, April 18, 1965, as translated in CDSP, vol. 16, no. 16 (May 12, 1965), p. 13.
106. Hannes Adomeit, "Soviet Risk-Taking and Crisis Behavior: From Coexistence?" Adelphi Papers, no. 101 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1973), p. 12.
107. As reported in New York Times, December 15, 1968.
108. Mohamed Heikal, The Road to Ramadan (Ballantine, 1975), pp. 177-78.
109. New York Times, Aug. 1, 1965.
110. Ibid., October 4, 1966.
111. Pentagon Papers, especially vol. 4. As an example, the Seventh Fleet stayed offshore out of respect for the Styx missile (which had sunk the Israeli ship Eilat) although it is generally asserted that the Styx was not used in the war.
112. Ulam, Expansion and Coexistence, p. 767.
113. Izvestiya, April 29, 1972, as excerpted in CDSP, vol. 24, no. 16 (May 17, 1972), p. 6.

114. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, World Armaments and Disarmament (SIPRI Yearbook 1973) (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1973), pp. 301, 302.
115. Izvestiya May 1, 1972, as translated in CDSP, vol. 24, no. 17 (May 24, 1972), p. 1.
116. Bradford Dismukes, "Soviet Employment of Naval Power for Political Purposes, 1962-75," in Michael McGwire and John McDonnell, eds., Soviet Naval Influence: Domestic and Foreign Dimensions (Praeger, 1977), pp. 501-02.
117. My assessment of Shelest's reaction benefits from Grey Hodnett, "Ukrainian Politics and the Purge of Shelest," paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Midwest Slavic Conference, Ann Arbor, Michigan, May 5-7, 1977.
118. Allen S. Whiting, The Chinese Calculus of Deterrence (University of Michigan Press, 1975).
119. Khrushchev, Khrushchev Remembers, p. 370.



## Chapter 9

### CRISES ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA

by Donald S. Zagoria and Janet D. Zagoria

An analysis of Soviet behavior during the Pueblo crisis in 1968, the EC-121 crisis in 1969, and the poplar tree incident in 1976 shows clearly that Soviet support for North Korean initiatives has been cautious and declining. In the Pueblo crisis Soviet ships and planes trailed and harassed U.S. ships and Moscow gave strong public support to the North Korean position, but it was only after the threat of war had passed that the USSR brought its naval deployment up to task force size. In the EC-121 crisis the Soviet Union made a token military response, gave lukewarm political support to Pyongyang, and actively joined the United States in looking for survivors from the plane. After the poplar tree killings the Russians did virtually nothing to help Pyongyang. Indeed, they may have urged Kim Il-Sung to send a conciliatory message to the United States.

Soviet caution in these three incidents seems to have been guided by a number of factors. First, the Soviet Union has been unwilling to risk confrontation with the United States over North Korean interests, which were mainly, during the period under discussion, to oust the United States from South Korea and reunify Korea by force. Here the Soviet attitude is directly analogous to its lack of support for Chinese provocations during the Taiwan Strait crisis of 1958. In both situations,

Moscow was simply not prepared to risk a military confrontation with the United States for local Communist goals.

Three other considerations have entered Soviet calculations about Korea: the unpredictability of North Korean leader Kim Il-Sung, North Korea's proximity to the Soviet Union, and Soviet fear of China. Kim has never inspired great trust in Moscow. Relations between it and Pyongyang in the 1960s and 1970s have varied between cool and lukewarm. Moscow is clearly wary of becoming involved in a military situation in which Kim controls the degree of risk. Soviet caution is evident in all three incidents discussed here. In the case of the EC-121, Moscow went so far as to warn Pyongyang publicly about taking independent military initiatives against the United States that could involve the Russians.

Geographically, North Korea is situated uncomfortably close to the Soviet Union and, in particular, to Vladivostok and other points in the Soviet Far East where Russia's Pacific forces are based. This means that a U.S. military threat to North Korea automatically becomes a threat to the Soviet Union and to its military position in the Far East. North Korean initiatives have forced the Soviet Union to protect itself against the possibility of U.S. retaliatory action, as well as to avoid provoking the United States to such action. In the Pueblo and EC-121 incidents, therefore, as long as U.S. military action seemed possible, the Soviet Union kept a limited military force in the area; but the moment the United States gave signs of dropping its military options by

removing the larger part of its crisis deployment, Soviet forces withdrew.

The third constraint on Soviet policy in Korea is China. Ever since the Chinese Communists intervened in the Korean War in 1950 and saved the North Korean regime from defeat, Pyongyang has--with the exception of a period during the Cultural Revolution in China--tilted toward Peking. The tilt has increased since the end of the Cultural Revolution in the late 1960s. Moscow has feared that a Korea unified by the North Korean Communists would move into the Chinese orbit and greatly complicate Soviet strategic problems in Northeast Asia.

Detente with the United States seems to have been another constraint in this period. Tension was just beginning to relax at the time of the Pueblo incident, and the USSR certainly did not want a military crisis with the United States over the incident to reverse this. By the time the North Koreans shot down the EC-121, Soviet-U.S. talks on limiting offensive and defensive missiles (ABMs) were planned. When the poplar tree killings took place, the Soviet Union was involved in discussions and agreements with the United States and other Western countries on a whole range of issues, including strategic arms limitation (SALT), European security and cooperation (Helsinki), and technological and other aid to the Soviet Union. Moscow was reluctant to endanger these discussions for Pyongyang's interests, which are marginal to its own. During the poplar tree crisis, its public support for the North Korean case was cool.

### The Pueblo Crisis

On January 23, 1968, North Korean patrol boats and submarine chasers suddenly surrounded the U.S. Navy electronic surveillance ship Pueblo outside the twelve-mile limit off the North Korean port of Wonsan. Claiming that the ship was in North Korea's territorial waters, the patrol boats opened fire on the Pueblo, injuring the ship's captain, Commander Lloyd M. Bucher, and several crew members, one critically. An armed North Korean party then boarded the ship, which was taken under guard to Wonsan.

The Johnson administration responded to the North Korean seizure with intense diplomatic activity and a show of military force in the Sea of Japan that was the largest naval buildup since the Cuban missile crisis in 1962. On the day the attack occurred, the United States sent an emergency call to North Korea through the Soviet Union asking Pyongyang to release the ship. Meeting with North Korean representatives next day at armistice talks in Panmunjom, U.S. representative Rear Admiral John V. Smith again demanded the return of the Pueblo and its crew but was rebuffed.

Washington twice--on January 24 and 26--requested Soviet mediation with Pyongyang to bring about the ship's release; both times Moscow brusquely rejected these requests. The United States then brought a complaint against North Korea before the United Nations, asking that the Security

Council act "with greatest urgency" to obtain the release of the ship and its crew. The United States indirectly warned that the UN Charter reserved to member states the right to defend themselves against unilateral military action.

Meanwhile, the United States ordered Task Force 77--comprising twenty-five ships--to enter the Sea of Japan. By January 24 a task group consisting of the attack carrier Enterprise and five destroyers was on station southeast of Korea. A second task group (the attack carrier Ranger and three destroyers) arrived in the area on January 31, and a third consisting of the antisubmarine carrier Yorktown and six destroyers arrived on February 2. The arrival of the carriers Kearsage and Coral Sea, the frigate Truxton, the intelligence ship Banner (the Pueblo's sister ship), and four more destroyers soon after completed Task Force 77. It was specifically instructed by General Earle Wheeler, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, not to attempt to free the Pueblo or approach it too closely. 1/

The Fifth Air Force established advance headquarters at Osan Air Base in Korea, two fighter-bomber squadrons were deployed from the United States to South Korea, and additional Strategic Air Command bombers were sent to the western Pacific. The U.S. Eighth Army in South Korea and South Korean military forces were put on alert, and land-based tactical air units in South Korea were reinforced. Finally, President Johnson called up nearly 15,000 air force and navy reserve personnel.

The Soviet Union countered this buildup with a naval buildup of its own. A Soviet intelligence ship and a destroyer were on patrol in

the Tsushima Strait when the crisis began, and they were spotted in the vicinity of U.S. ships on January 24. 2/ As Task Force 77 moved into the Sea of Japan, the USSR began interposing ships between the North Korean coast and the U.S. fleet--close to the U.S. ships. The Soviet ships included Kotlin- and Kashin-class destroyers (one equipped with surface-to-surface missiles), tankers, submarines, a single AGI, and the trawler Gidrolog, which had electronic devices to intercept communications. On January 26 the Gidrolog was shadowing the U.S. attack carrier Enterprise, which was in the middle of the task force. 3/ Soviet ships shadowed and harassed incoming U.S. units, bringing about a dozen incidents by mid-February. In an incident on February 1, the Soviet merchant ship Kapitan Vislobokov collided with the U.S. destroyer Rowan after failing to yield the right of way.

Soviet media began reporting on the Pueblo's capture immediately, and the Soviet international service carried news of developments as they occurred. An editorial in the Red Star on January 28 spoke of the Soviet Union's reinforcing its "peaceful policy" with its "defensive might." 4/ But Moscow withheld official comment on the episode for more than a week after it took place. Until the end of January, therefore, the situation was somewhat uncertain, with intentions on both the Soviet and the American sides not entirely clear.

The situation began to change on January 31, when North Korea hinted to the United States that it should request closed meetings at Panmunjom. The United States immediately responded, and U.S.-North Korean meetings began on February 2.

Two days later the Soviet Union issued its most authoritative comment on the Pueblo affair, when Pravda ran an article signed "Observer," indicating that it directly reflected the opinion of the Politburo. Called "The Policy of Adventure and Provocation Is Doomed to Failure," the article recalled Communist support of North Korea during the Korean War: "The DPRK with the support of the countries of the socialist community with all peace-loving forces, demonstrated its courage and fortitude so convincingly a decade and a half ago in its fight against the American interventionists." The article concluded with a warning against U.S. military moves and a demand for withdrawal of the U.S. naval force from the Sea of Japan:

Is it not clear that endeavors to win something from a sovereign socialist state--the DPRK--with the aid of threats and pressure have no chance of success?

It is of particular importance now that the United States take no rash steps which could complicate the situation still further.

The United States must proceed...on the basis of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the DPRK and its national dignity...[meaning] first of all a complete cessation of the campaign of blackmail and threats in relation to the DPRK. 5/

This was Moscow's most belligerent statement since the crisis had begun. Coming when it did, it seemed to suggest that if the United States would withdraw the Enterprise and most of the rest of its forces from the Sea of Japan, the Panmunjom talks might get moving and the Pueblo crew might be released. At the same time, a Hungarian delegate to the UN who was in

close touch with the North Koreans hinted to the United States that it should send the Enterprise away from Korea, again, suggesting that such a move would bear fruit at Panmunjom. Probably to back up these suggestions, on February 5 and 6 the Soviet Union reinforced its naval contingent in the Sea of Japan with more ships--six cruisers and destroyers, three of which were equipped with surface-to-surface missiles--bringing to sixteen the number of Soviet ships in the area.

On February 6 Washington sent the Enterprise south through the Tsushima Strait away from Korea. Although land-based tactical air units were retained in the area and in late February U.S. F-106s were deployed in Korea, the withdrawal of the Enterprise signaled Washington's abandonment of military options and its willingness to rely on the Panmunjom negotiations to free the Pueblo and its crew. Following this event, on February 8, Red Star ran an article mentioning--for the first time since the crisis had begun--the Soviet-North Korean defense treaty of 1961, 6/ implying that if North Korea was attacked the Soviet Union might come to its defense.

Meanwhile, Radio Pyongyang repeatedly broadcast charges that confessions made by Pueblo crew members indicated that the ship was 7.6 miles from North Korea's Yo Island when it was seized, that is, inside the twelve-mile limit claimed by North Korea. The confessions purportedly said further that the ship had made four other incursions into North Korean territorial waters before it was captured.

U.S.-North Korean negotiation efforts continued steadily for a time at Panmunjom; by March 4, the two sides had met ten times. The



talks then resumed periodically throughout 1968, with both sides putting forward different formulas under which the Pueblo crew might be released. 7/ Finally, on December 22, the United States announced that an agreement had been reached at a private meeting of the Korean Military Armistice Commission. The same day, U.S. negotiator Major General Gilbert H. Woodward signed a North Korean document stating that the ship had violated North Korean territorial waters and was spying when seized. The document contained a U.S. apology (drafted by North Korea) for the intrusion, and a promise by the United States that it would send no more intelligence ships into North Korean waters. But the United States repudiated the apology before the document was signed with the full and prior knowledge of the North Koreans. On December 23 the Pueblo's surviving crew members were returned to U.S. authorities at the DMZ, along with the body of the crew member who had died. The Pueblo itself was never returned.

#### A North Korean Initiative

The capture of the Pueblo appears to have been a North Korean venture initiated without consultation with or the prior knowledge of either the Russians or the Chinese. Several things point to this conclusion.

There is no evidence of collusion by either Communist power. 8/ Indications are that North Korean relations with both of them were not close in 1968. De-Stalinization, differences over the Cuban missile crisis, the Soviet Union's pursuit of detente with the West, and North

Korea's support of China in the Sino-Soviet dispute had combined during the late 1950s and the 1960s to produce substantial tension between Moscow and Pyongyang. Under these conditions North Korea had carried out a purge of pro-Soviet elements in its leadership. The Soviet Union had sharply curtailed its own and Eastern Europe's economic aid and had completely cut off military aid, actions that directly affected North Korea's ability to carry out its seven-year plan (1961-1967). In October 1966 the Pyongyang government was forced to extend its economic plan for three years. In late 1964 the North Korean paper Nodong Sinmun virulently criticized the Soviet Union, charging that it was economically exploiting North Korea under the pretext of rendering economic aid. 9/

Relations between the two countries began to improve only after Khrushchev's ouster in 1964, but the improvement was slow. In February 1965 Premier Kosygin went to Pyongyang for an official state visit. On that occasion, he assured North Korea that the Soviet Union was prepared to furnish all moral and material assistance within its means, saying it was the "sacred duty" of all socialist countries and Communists to combat imperialism and to support the struggle for national liberation. 10/ Kosygin also evidently agreed in principle to a resumption of Soviet military assistance and an increase in economic aid.

In May a Soviet-North Korean agreement that the Soviet Union give military assistance to strengthen North Korea's "defense potential" was signed in Moscow. Moscow promised to supply jet fuel, spare parts, antiaircraft missiles, and a limited number of MIG-21s, and Soviet military academies were to resume training North Korean military personnel. 11/

In June a major new economic agreement was signed.

In early 1965, when a North Korean delegation attended the Twenty-third Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, CPSU leader Brezhnev reaffirmed Soviet support for the Korean people in their struggle for the unification of Korea. The same year, Soviet party organs carried an increasing number of articles friendly to North Korea.

By May 1967, when Deputy Premier Vladimir Novikov paid a goodwill visit to Pyongyang, he was able to express satisfaction at growing Soviet-North Korean relations "not only in the economic sphere but also in the realms of party, social, cultural and other activities." 12/ Moscow had begun to resupply Pyongyang with limited kinds of military equipment. From 1967 through 1968 it reportedly furnished 250 of North Korea's 500 military airplanes, and between 1965 and 1968 supplied eight of its ten missile bases. 13/ North Korea was also said to have acquired 500 air defense missiles, and its air force was estimated to include 21 MIG-21s, 350 MIG-17s, and 80 IL-28s. 14/

Still, the process of warming up Soviet-North Korean relations was just getting under way at the time the North Koreans sized the Pueblo. This did not prevent Kim Il-Sung's making an important programmatic speech on October 5, 1966, expressing his unhappiness with the Russians. He elaborated on the theme of North Korean independence, railed against "modern revisionism," and criticized the USSR for "compromising with U.S. imperialism" and for attempting to dictate war policy to North Vietnam. Most significantly of all, Kim's speech expressed apprehension that "the

U.S. imperialists, while refraining insofar as possible from worsening their relations with big countries, concentrate their aggression mainly on Vietnam and try to swallow up such divided or small countries as Cuba, Korea, and East Germany, one by one." He clearly feared a standoff between the United States, the Soviet Union, and China that would work against the goals of smaller Communist states such as North Korea. 15/

Implicit in Kim's remarks, too, was his dissatisfaction with the level and quality of Soviet arms sent to North Korea. Moscow consistently held back, for example, its most advanced fighter planes, long-range bombers, and other weapon systems that could be used for offensive purposes against the South.

North Korean-Chinese relations were, as one analyst puts it, merely "formal" at the time of the Pueblo incident. 16/ Although Pyongyang still owed Peking a debt of gratitude for Chinese help during the Korean War and had sided with China in the Sino-Soviet dispute, it had stubbornly resisted Chinese control. Kim Il-Sung had never praised Mao Tse-tung's thought. Nor was Chinese required as a foreign language in North Korea. 17/ North Korea's independence and the improvement in its relations with the Soviet Union may have spurred China to make territorial demands on the North Korean border. For in July 1965 North Korean embassy officials in India revealed that China was claiming a hundred square miles near Mount Paektu as "compensation" for its aid during the Korean War. 18/ By early 1968 there were reports that the border had been sealed.

But it was the Cultural Revolution that put the greatest strain on relations with North Korea. Kim Il-Sung denounced it. The Chinese Red Guard responded with posters accusing "fat" Kim of sabotaging the Vietnam struggle, slandering China, and causing famine in his own country; they even reported that he had been arrested by the army for following a revisionist line. A month later, veterans of the Chinese People's Volunteers, who had fought in Korea during the war, verbally attacked Kim. North Korea responded by threatening China with "consequences" if it persisted in its attacks. 19/

Moreover, Kim's policy statement of October 1966 was directed as much at China as it was at the Soviet Union. Attacking "left opportunism" generally, Kim also criticized China specifically for obstructing unity over Vietnam--by its rejection of a Soviet plan to transport Soviet arms to Vietnam through Chinese territory--and for attempting to dictate its own policies on North Vietnam. Far from being close, then, North Korean-Chinese relations were deteriorating at the time of the Pueblo incident, and it is unlikely that the two would have colluded in a military operation.

Finally, the Pueblo attack was part of a larger pattern of North Korean aggression. The North Korean campaign was touched off by an August 12, 1966, editorial in the party paper Nodong Sinmun stressing independence. 20/ Then, speaking in October to the North Korean Labor (Communist) party, Kim announced his abandonment of the policy of trying to unify Korea by peaceful means and the adoption of a new, militant policy toward the South. He said reunification could be accomplished only by armed force.

In the months that followed, North Korean statements employed harsher and harsher rhetoric, and there were repeated warnings that war could break out at any time. The North Koreans insisted that the withdrawal of U.S. troops from South Korea was a precondition for Seoul's "liberation." By the beginning of 1968 the North Korean attitude toward the United States was seen by U.S. observers in South Korea as more belligerent than at any time since 1953.

At the same time the number of armed incidents along the DMZ rose. 21/ North Korea also seized South Korean fishing boats in increasing numbers, accusing South Korea of sending warships in disguise. Pyongyang asserted on January 6, 1968, that such "reckless aggression" would result in "one hundred-fold retaliation" by North Korea. 22/

These incidents were accompanied by a substantial increase in the North Korean defense budget in 1967. A new purge of North Korean leaders completed in mid-December of that year put professional military men in control of the country; army generals were appointed to the North Korean defense, construction, education, interior, and food procurement ministries, and an estimated hundred people regarded as moderates were weeded out of official positions. Jack Anderson contends further, citing "top U.S. Army officers," that North Korean army training was shifted from defensive to offensive tactics, important military installations were placed underground, families were told to stock emergency supplies for war, and Kim Il-Sung issued a proclamation permitting forced removal of "hostile" elements in the population to mountain camps where they could be kept under surveillance. 23/ We cannot be sure of this, but

throughout 1968 the North did step up its campaign to infiltrate guerrillas, saboteurs, and agents into South Korea, and its propaganda reported a rising revolutionary tide in the South comparable to that said to be developing at the time in South Vietnam. All this suggests that North Korea was readying for a decisive military confrontation with the South.

This impression is strengthened by the North Korean attempt to assassinate South Korean President Park Chung Hee on January 21, 1968, two days before the seizure of the Pueblo. A group of twenty-one North Korean agents penetrated to within a thousand yards of the presidential residence on the outskirts of Seoul before they were stopped by South Korean police, who battled them in the streets. The next day, the lone survivor of the North Korean squad--a twenty-six year-old lieutenant--said at a news conference held by the Seoul regime that the sole mission of the group, which had undergone intensive two-year training, was to kill President Park. He added that it was his understanding North Korea would soon launch a major offensive aimed at unifying the peninsula by 1970. 24/

The timing of these events in 1968 indicates that the North Korean move was linked to what was happening in Vietnam. The attack against the Pueblo and the attempted assassination of President Park took place in the week before the Communists' Tet offensive in South Vietnam. Relations between North Korea and North Vietnam were close throughout the Vietnam War, and it is likely that Pyongyang knew of Hanoi's plans for

the Tet offensive. In moving when they did, the North Koreans may have wished to signal to Russia and China that they too meant to press forward against a non-Communist South. They undoubtedly hoped to take advantage of the American plight in Vietnam. Their attack would force the United States to face the dilemma of backing down--with all of the consequences that might ensue--or of responding militarily and thus becoming embroiled in two Asian land wars at once. That Pyongyang had its eye on the Vietnamese situation is clear. After the Pueblo attack it ran a statement by Le Van Ha, head of the South Vietnamese National Liberation Front (Vietcong) mission in Hanoi, saying that the North Korean action represented "powerful support for the South Vietnamese people." 25/

One can only speculate about how much the North Koreans hoped to gain by their move. They must have figured that if the United States went to war, the Soviet Union and China would have to come to their defense under their respective treaties. In this case, the two Communist superpowers might be encouraged to patch up their quarrel to deal with the threat from the United States. Pyongyang must have hoped to exploit the situation for an all-out offensive to get the United States out of South Korea and reunify the peninsula. Even if such an offensive did not materialize, the two Communist countries would at least have to help defend North Korea. The seizure of the Pueblo came on the eve of a preparatory meeting for a world Communist party conference, scheduled for February 26. Pyongyang may have thought to force the conference to take



up the question with the aim of obtaining a reaffirmation of the Russian and Chinese defense commitments and perhaps increased military, political, and economic aid.

Undoubtedly, North Korea's determination to move decisively in 1968 was strengthened by the sight of South Korea flourishing economically and appearing to stabilize politically. Seoul's first five-year plan (1962-66) had been highly successful. Per capita income and foreign investment had both increased dramatically. 26/ And Seoul's political climate was improving. In May 1967 President Park was reelected to a second term, and the following November the country's six-month impasse over the fraudulent June 1967 elections ended when the major opposition party stopped boycotting the National Assembly. These developments dimmed prospects for an imminent breakup of the South Korean political setup and must have heightened Kim's desire to move quickly before the situation could solidify. The attack on the Pueblo might drive a wedge between South Korea and the United States by raising doubts in Seoul about the strength and trustworthiness of its major ally. It might enable Pyongyang to trade the U.S. crew for concessions from the South Korean regime. Soon after the Pueblo was taken, reports circulated at the United Nations that the North might be willing to swap the ship's crew for North Koreans held prisoner by South Korea. 27/ Or North Korea may have hoped by its combined actions against Park and the Pueblo to force Seoul to bring back the thousands of military troops it had in South Vietnam and thus give up the political and economic benefits it gained from this policy.

Domestic purposes, too, would be served by the attacks. They would justify to a population doubtless demoralized by the North's sorry economic performance a continued austerity program and would demonstrate to any waverers in the North Korean leadership the need to rally around Kim. War preparation and the danger of an attack became prominent propaganda themes in Pyongyang's domestic media after the Pueblo was captured. 28/

The Pueblo incident occurred when the peace movement in the United States, urging a retreat of American power from the Asian mainland, was reaching its peak. By seizing the Pueblo Pyongyang might have hoped to bring home to the United States how costly its support of South Korea was and perhaps gain a reduction, if not a withdrawal, of this support. Pyongyang may have sought, in particular, to deter future U.S. reconnaissance efforts along the North Korean coast that could impede its campaign against the South. In any case, North Korea would be certain to humiliate the United States in the eyes of the world.

At this time U.S.-Japanese relations were strained, mostly because of the U.S. involvement in Vietnam. Japan was worried about being drawn into the conflict, and the United States was pressing Tokyo to give stronger support to its policy in Vietnam. The Pueblo was based in Sasebo at the time of its capture; an attack on it might raise once again the question whether Japan should provide such U.S. ships with port facilities. 29/

Perhaps, too, the North Korean attack was motivated, as one writer has contended, partly by the fact that Kim was approaching the age of sixty, when Koreans traditionally finish the first phase of life. Kim had made clear that his "life goal" was to reunify the peninsula.<sup>30/</sup> The year 1968 was the anniversary of the legendary founding of the Korean nation and of the Silla Unification, when the country was brought under a single central political rule.<sup>31/</sup> It would have been a perfect time for Kim to realize his goal.

#### U.S. Reaction: Surprise and Caution

The move surprised the United States for several reasons. Intelligence ships had operated successfully before without being apprehended. The Pueblo had been stationed off the North Korean coast for two weeks and had been working in the Wonsan area for some days before it was attacked. Also, North Korea's aggressive statements over the years had lost much of their impact because of their virulence and frequency. U.S. observers in Korea apparently did not detect any change in Pyongyang's statements indicating that it was about to make a move against the United States. As it happened, in the U.S. government there was no experienced person monitoring the North Korean navy on a day-to-day basis.<sup>32/</sup>

The attack began at about 11:30 p.m. (EST) on January 22. At the time, it was not known either how close the Pueblo had been to the North Korean coast or whether the North Korean action was part of a

larger Communist military operation that had Russian or Chinese backing.

The administration proceeded almost immediately to consider a series of military options. These eventually narrowed down to four: (1) an attempt to storm Wonsan harbor and retrieve the ship; (2) aerial bombardment and sinking of the Pueblo at Wonsan to deny the Communists access to the intelligence-gathering equipment on board; (3) retaliation against North Korea or the Soviet Union by seizing or destroying a Communist ship, raiding Wonsan or Pyongyang, or knocking out a large military installation; and (4) blockading North Korea. 33/

The first, and probably most appropriate, response proved to be impossible. It was quickly determined that conventionally equipped forces could not reach the ship before dark. 34/ Air force units on alert in South Korea had only nuclear weapons, which would have meant immediately escalating the conflict, possibly encouraging Soviet or Chinese intervention. Conventionally equipped aircraft were sent from Okinawa, but by the time they reached South Korea, darkness had begun to fall, so they were not sent on. South Korean aircraft under United Nations command were not asked to assist. In any case, they did not have the delivery capabilities necessary for the rapid response required to free the Pueblo.

The other courses were rejected as being too risky, unacceptable, or ineffective. A bombardment of Wonsan or retaliatory action against the Communists might elicit countermeasures by Pyongyang and its allies; the administration was anxious to avoid any action that would justify

further Communist aggression. After the Tet offensive began in South Vietnam, Washington was even more wary of doing anything to encourage the opening of a second front in Asia. Air strikes in the Gulf of Tonkin had led to a large-scale U.S. involvement in Vietnam and public disapproval, and the administration was reluctant to undertake new strikes. North Korea's trade was mainly overland with the USSR and China; a blockade would therefore have little effect. Other suggestions that were offered--for example, luring the Gidrolog, then shadowing the Enterprise, into South Korean waters and encouraging the South Koreans to seize her--were given short shrift. 35/

Moreover, none of these courses would have brought about the return of the Pueblo crew, a consideration that weighed heavily with the administration. Early signals by the Soviet Union and its Eastern European allies encouraged U.S. optimism about prospects for gaining the crew's release through diplomatic means, and the North Koreans themselves soon opened up the possibility that talks could bring about a resolution of the situation. President Johnson, with an election coming up and with plans at the time to run for a second term, was eager to take a moderate course that might bring about the crew's release. And Congress, the press, and the American public were all on the side of caution. Opinion in other countries--those of Western Europe and Japan--was also for caution.

These considerations--all of which were probably reinforced by the Soviet military buildup--combined to promote a U.S. response that was highly visible but restrained. When Task Force 77 sailed into the Sea of Japan, it went under the code name "Formation Star," designed to avoid

giving the impression that it was going to war. 36/ The air force and navy reservists were neither ordered overseas nor sent to bases for eventual deployment; that is, they were never positioned to go to war. Even when the Soviet merchant ship collided with one of the U.S. destroyers, the United States did not respond. Instead, administration officials excused the ship, although under international practice it should have given way to the U.S. warship.

Very early, in fact, the Johnson administration showed a pre-disposition for diplomatic action to effect the crew's release. It immediately asked Ambassador Llewellyn Thompson in Moscow to solicit Soviet mediation. When this request was rejected, Washington made another bid for Soviet help. Even after the second request was rejected, it maintained contact with the Soviet Union on the issue. From the beginning of the crisis it was evident to Washington that Soviet influence in Pyongyang was limited and that Moscow could not afford to appear to be talking too openly with U.S. officials, particularly after Kim's October 1966 statement charging the Soviet Union with collusion with the West. For this reason apparently, spokesmen for the administration were careful not to interpret the Soviet rejections of its requests for help as being Moscow's last word. This suggests that in the contacts between U.S. and Communist representatives Washington was given some assurance that the Soviet Union might help behind the scenes, to ease tension.

On January 25, after the initial U.S. requests to Moscow had been turned down, Clark Clifford--President Johnson's nominee for secretary of

defense--told the Senate Armed Services Committee he believed Johnson would make every diplomatic effort to rescue the Pueblo crew. 37/ The following day, the President spoke on national television on finding a "proper and peaceful solution." He said he was confident that the American people would exhibit in this crisis, as they had in others, "determination and sanity." 38/

On January 27 a State Department spokesman said that the Soviet attitude on the crisis was negative but not hopeless and that the possibility of Soviet intervention had not been ruled out, adding, "The Russians do not agree with our explanation of the incident, but they are not moving to heat up the situation." 39/ Washington was leaving room for Moscow to come around.

When the North Koreans suggested on January 31 that the United States ask for closed talks, it quickly did. The talks went on for many sessions even though they were not proving fruitful and U.S. representatives wondered why Pyongyang was continuing them. 40/ The United States also quickly picked up the hints North Korea gave about how the Pueblo crew's release might be brought about. 41/

As early as February 1, therefore, it was clear to all, including the Soviet Union, that the administration was giving up its military options. The removal of the Enterprise from the Wonsan area demonstrated the administration's decision to rely on diplomacy. Johnson maintained this course even though during the 1968 presidential campaign Republican candidate Richard Nixon tried to exploit the government's lack of action. The administration may even have turned Nixon's criticism to its own

advantage. By playing on Communist fear that Nixon, if elected, would be sure to take a tough stand on the matter, perhaps including retaliatory military action, it may have encouraged the release of the Pueblo crew before 1969.

Soviet Policy: Mixed Signals and Low Risk

At the time of the Pueblo incident, the Soviet Union was engaged in developing a dialogue with the United States on various questions of mutual concern--notably, Vietnam, the Middle East, and arms limitation. Talks had been held between Premier Kosygin and President Johnson at Glassboro, New Jersey, in June 1967. Plans were being developed for a nuclear nonproliferation treaty. These steps undoubtedly raised the hopes of Soviet leaders that they might be able to divert some of their limited resources into nonmilitary areas and move forward with economic development.

Meanwhile, Soviet influence in Eastern Europe was threatened by the rise of anti-Soviet forces in Czechoslovakia. On January 5, 1968, these forces put Alexander Dubcek into power in Prague. Moscow must have feared the contagious effect this might have elsewhere in Eastern Europe.

In 1968 the Sino-Soviet dispute was in full swing. Moscow was preoccupied with mastering forces inside the Communist bloc against the Chinese. Largely for this reason, it was trying to reestablish influence over Pyongyang, going so far as to begin resupplying North Korea militarily.



Moscow was doing this at some cost to itself, since its scarce resources were already being siphoned off by Hanoi, just then mounting the Tet offensive against South Vietnam. Moreover, knowing it was Kim Il-Sung's declared intention to reunify Korea by force, Moscow must have been concerned about how its weapons would be used.

When the Pueblo crisis developed, then, the Kremlin must have been of two minds. This is indicated by Soviet behavior, which showed two noticeably different sides, one hard-line and belligerent, the other conciliatory. On the one side, Moscow must have been pleased for several reasons. First, to judge from the Soviet media's handling of the crisis, it must have gained satisfaction from seeing its major adversary put on the spot. On January 25, for example, Pravda crowed, picking up a North Korean phrase, that the Pentagon had been caught "redhanded." 42/ The Russians also abruptly turned down the first two American efforts to obtain their mediation. When Ambassador Thompson approached the Soviet foreign ministry to ask for Soviet intervention, his message was not even accepted. Kosygin, traveling in India at the time, confirmed that the United States would have to deal directly with North Korea. 43/ Little sympathy was shown publicly for the plight of the United States.

Second, Moscow may have felt that the capture of the Pueblo would teach the United States a useful lesson: not to encroach with its sophisticated intelligence-gathering equipment onto the territory of the Soviet Union and its allies.

Third, the Russians may have welcomed an opportunity to put North Korea in their debt by supporting it. Unlike Peking, Moscow reported the incident promptly on January 24. At that time, Tass noted that an American intelligence warship had been apprehended in North Korean territorial waters and repeated the North Korean charge that this "provocation by the American armed forces" was the most serious since the armistice of 1953. The article added that the U.S. press was seeking to distract public attention from "U.S. aggressive actions against the DPRK." 44/ At the United Nations, where in the absence of North Korean representation the Soviet Union was guardian of North Korean interests, the Soviet delegate consistently upheld North Korea's position that the Pueblo had violated its territorial waters. Kosygin said the same thing. 45/ Clearly the USSR's public statements backing North Korea's case were meant to serve a political purpose.

The timing and scope of the Soviet military buildup suggest the same thing. Certainly, the Soviet Union must have feared that the United States would take retaliatory action after the Pueblo attack. Since the United States was on the defensive in Vietnam, it might try to recoup its losses with a move against Communist targets in North Korea and perhaps a Soviet vessel. The administration did in fact consider such a move.

On the other side, therefore, after their first comments on the Pueblo incident, the Russians took pains to downplay the situation. Kosygin said that the Pueblo affair was merely a case of one country's ship straying into the territorial waters of another, suggesting that it

could have been an accident. 46/ Asked on the same occasion about a possible Soviet role in mediation, Kosygin did not reject the possibility but hinted broadly to reporters that Moscow might act as mediator. 47/ On January 28 a report from Seoul said that the Soviet Union had quietly indicated its willingness to play a peacemaking role; Kosygin was reported to have said so directly in talks with Indian Prime Minister Gandhi. 48/ Reporters following Kosygin gained the clear impression that the Soviet Union was attempting to defuse the crisis. 49/

Moscow may have passed along to the United States soon after the Pueblo's capture a report on the crew, assuring Washington that the men were being properly treated. 50/ All the while, Soviet and Eastern European representatives maintained contact with U.S. representatives. In these days, Moscow tried to encourage the United States to rely on diplomatic action to obtain the release of the Pueblo and its crew.

But Moscow could not afford to seem to conciliate the United States publicly. This may have been the reason it turned down the initial U.S. requests for help, since these had been made public. The day after it was reported that the Soviet Union might play a peacemaking role, this was denied by Soviet representatives in the group traveling with Kosygin. Similarly, on January 30 Moscow denied the accuracy of a newspaper report alleging that Kosygin had said the Pueblo crew might be traded for captured North Korean agents. 51/

Soviet moderation seems to have gone further than indirect hints. Indications are that the Soviet Union expended some of its limited credit with North Korea by pressing it to enter talks with the United

States. Very possibly, Moscow signaled Pyongyang that it would receive no support if the United States were provoked to a major military confrontation. And Moscow may have pressed Pyongyang to enter talks at Panmunjom to get U.S. forces out of the Sea of Japan.

By early February, the United States had evidently chosen to pursue diplomatic, rather than military, action to free the Pueblo crew. Probably both to strengthen the American commitment to diplomacy and to pick up points in Pyongyang, the Soviet Union then issued its Pravda warning and reinforced its naval contingent in the Sea of Japan. By then, such moves must have seemed safe to Moscow. Just to be sure, however, it demanded that the Enterprise be moved out of the area. Pravda, for its part, used a tone that the New York Times found imploring rather than denunciatory. 52/ Only after the Enterprise was safely out of the Sea of Japan did the Soviet Union mention its defense treaty with North Korea. 53/ As in the Taiwan Strait crisis, the Soviet Union's most belligerent moves came after the real danger of large-scale conflict had passed.

The purposes of the Soviet naval buildup were three: to gather information on U.S. intentions in the Sea of Japan; to deter the United States from any of a variety of military moves it might have been tempted to make against North Korean or Soviet targets in an effort to rescue the Pueblo crew or to retaliate for the attack on it; and to maintain credibility with North Korea and other Soviet allies who might regard inaction as a sign of Soviet weakness.

This interpretation of the Soviet military response is supported by other evidence. First, the incident was not immediately reported on the domestic news service. On January 24 it was reported on the international service; a day later it was reported domestically, then international service reports only were resumed. This suggests that the Soviet population was not being readied for war.

Then, the two Soviet ships on patrol in the Tsushima Strait shadowed U.S. vessels as they entered the Sea of Japan; they did nothing more. When Soviet planes arrived, they flew around the U.S. ships in what seems clearly an exercise in reconnaissance and harassment. Rear Admiral Epes of the Enterprise said that the Soviet planes were Badgers, some equipped for reconnaissance only and others armed with air-to-surface missiles. At first they simply flew down to take a look at the U.S. ships, and after being intercepted, they turned back. But then they started going through the U.S. formation (evidently south) toward the Tsushima Strait, one day conducting thirty "raids" at all altitudes, a few as low as thirty-five or forty feet above deck. 54/ Epes apparently did not take the raids seriously. This seems to have been the first case of Soviet harassment of U.S. ships, clearly a controlled one that operated at a relatively low level.

In addition to the raids the Pueblo's sister ship Banner one evening saw the nuclear-powered frigate Truxton bearing down at full speed. The Banner passed a message to a nearby carrier that there was a Soviet intelligence ship in the middle of the task force. The carrier responded: "Hey, Truxton, knock it off, that's our buddy." 55/ The

carrier evidently had been trailed by the Soviet ship for some time and was confident it was merely carrying out a reconnaissance assignment.

Armbrister suggests that the Soviet Union, which had long considered the Sea of Japan its special preserve, was simply protecting its interests. 56/ Probably it was also ensuring that it would have warning if the United States should decide to make any aggressive move while attempting--through harassment--to deter such a move.

The February 1 incident between the Kapitan Vislobokov and the Rowan occurred well south of Wonsan. It is not clear whether it was an independent action by the Soviet captain or a slap by Moscow. Soviet merchant captains are notorious for their violation of agreements made between their country and other countries, so the captain could have acted on his own. He may, however, have been acting on instructions. After the incident, the Soviet Union made an official protest but gave it no publicity. This suggests that if the incident was designed by Moscow it was meant simply to warn the United States that Moscow was not happy with the U.S. military presence in the area. U.S. officials clearly did not feel the action was intended as a provocation. They knew that the Soviet Union was worried by the presence of the U.S. task force in the area, as evidenced by Washington's quick response to the suggestion that the Enterprise be moved, as it was on February 6.

One Soviet specialist has suggested that Moscow encouraged North Korea to return the Pueblo crew. 57/ Max Frankel, writing in April, seemed confident that Moscow was trying to help arrange the release of the ship. 58/ The matter was probably taken up during the February visit

to Pyongyang of CPSU Secretary Boris N. Ponomarev and in the course of other Soviet-North Korean contacts in 1968; and it may have been in the initial period from January 23 to February 1 as well.

The Ponomarev delegation visited North Korea on February 9 and 10. Although there was no public indication of the substance of the talks, it seems plausible that the Soviet Union insisted on an explanation of the incident and at the same time assessed North Korean military needs in light of the new development. The visit apparently did lead to an increase in certain kinds of Soviet military aid to North Korea, as well as a speeded-up delivery of previous commitments. According to one report, by mid-August North Korea had underground hangars in several of its fifteen airfields, and its MIG-21 fleet had been doubled to sixty. 59/ The Soviet Union had also more than doubled--from fourteen to thirty-five--North Korea's surface-to-air missile (SAM) sites since January and had supplied other equipment. 60/ But neither then nor later did it supply North Korea with MIG-23s or with more advanced SAMs of the kind it later delivered to Egypt. In other words, while the USSR was ready to support the North Koreans, it was prepared to do so only if it could be done relatively cheaply and with minimum risk to Soviet interests.

If the Soviet response to the crisis was cautious, the Chinese response was even more so. China did not report the incident until January 26, three days after it had occurred, and then gave merely a brief

factual account. At the time, China was caught up in its dispute with the Soviet Union and concerned about the Soviet military buildup on the border, which threatened China's security. On its southern flank it was committed to supporting Hanoi, as North Vietnam launched its offensive against the South. Internally, China was going through a major upheaval as the Cultural Revolution reached new heights of fervor under the Red Guard. It could not have welcomed a North Korean-U.S. confrontation that might threaten its industrial areas in the northeast. The Chinese may even have suspected that the seizure was a Soviet-North Korean venture. They therefore confined themselves to playing on North Korean fear of Japan. 61/ This form of Chinese support could not have been well received by a Pyongyang bent on pursuing its campaign against South Korea.

North Korea was, in fact, unhappy with both the Soviet and the Chinese response to the crisis. On January 27 the Pyongyang regime issued a statement saying it hoped "all socialist countries will pay deep attention to the affair" and express "active support and solidarity to the Korean people in their just struggle." 62/ The admonition must have been directed particularly to the Chinese, and the Chinese seem to have understood it so. For on January 28 they responded with a statement--the only other one Peking made about the Pueblo affair--saying that North Korea was "entirely right" in its "decisive measure of self-defense" and that the Chinese government and people "firmly support the just stand" of the North Koreans in countering "U.S. imperialism's flagrant



provocation." They added: "Should U.S. imperialism dare to embark on a new adventure, it is bound to taste the bitter fruit of its own making and receive even more punishment." 63/ This was hardly the "active" support North Korea had asked for; China was merely a bystander. The Soviet Union's response was so much stronger, it must have expected to gain some credit in Pyongyang.

The Soviet Union may also have welcomed the prospect of obtaining valuable intelligence information from the Pueblo. Although all reports from the Pueblo crew indicate that at the time of the capture the North Koreans were quite uninterested in the ship's intelligence-gathering equipment, 64/ the Russians must have expected to profit handsomely from it. Armbrister says that, according to U.S. intelligence reports, within a couple of days dozens of Soviet technicians had flown to Wonsan and boarded the ship. 65/ A Czech defector has said that briefings given the Czechs after the Pueblo's capture indicated that the Russians were getting valuable information from the ship. 66/ Moreover, the ship was never returned. From an intelligence standpoint the Russians could have been gratified by the North Korean action.

However, Moscow also had reason to be worried by it, and the other side of Soviet behavior in the crisis reflects this. The Russians may have wanted to see the United States embarrassed, but they must have been worried that if the United States were humiliated in both South Vietnam and Korea it might react aggressively, setting off a major conflagration that would activate the Soviet-North Korean defense treaty

and threaten to embroil the USSR in war. This would explain why Russians were heard saying off the record at the United Nations that while they felt North Korea had taught the United States a lesson it deserved it would be a mistake to try to humiliate a great power, particularly when it was on the defensive in Vietnam. 67/

The Russians must also have suspected North Korea of deliberately creating the crisis to force Moscow into granting it increased military aid. Moscow would have resented this pressure both because its aid to North Vietnam was already draining its resources and because it feared encouraging North Korea to attack South Korea, dragging the USSR into a war against its will. Far from wanting a war or even heightened tension in Asia in early 1968, Moscow appears to have sought a reduction of tension. It was then engaged in negotiations with the United States on an ABM treaty and with the Japanese on plans to develop Siberia. Tension in Korea could only harm both sets of negotiations. Also, the Soviet Union probably has not wanted to see Korea unified by the North Koreans, much less by the intransigent Kim Il-Sung. A Korea reunified under Kim could become linked to China; this would be a nightmare to Moscow, politically and strategically. Finally, Moscow was engaged in its own extensive naval electronic intelligence operations, which were equally vulnerable to seizure. North Korea's action in effect violated the tacit Soviet-American understanding on these activities. Moscow must have feared for the safety of its own reconnaissance ships.

These conflicting considerations did not leave the Soviet Union with too many options. It could not afford to permit the United States to threaten either Soviet or North Korean security. Nor could it allow U.S. ships to move freely into the Sea of Japan. It also could not permit Pyongyang to slide into the Chinese camp. It thus had to make some military response and a public show of support for Pyongyang. At the same time, Moscow did not want, by its own military or political behavior, to provoke the United States to retaliatory action. Nor did it want to encourage the North Koreans to follow their initiative with other aggressive moves. It therefore made a conservative military response while trying to persuade the United States privately that diplomatic action was likely to bring results. Possibly Moscow could have reacted more forcefully to the U.S. military buildup without provoking the United States to take retaliatory action. It could, for example, have sent in a matching number of ships. It could have marshaled more impressive airpower. It could have hampered the movement of Task Force 77 ships. It chose to lean toward caution.

Similarly, on the political front the Soviet Union was conciliatory. It also refrained from supporting Pyongyang's more extravagant claims. During the first week or two after the Pueblo seizure North Korea contended that the guerilla movement in the South was growing in strength and breadth. The Soviet media ignored these claims, and after the immediate crisis was over, they were virtually silent about the Pueblo

affair. 68/

In September 1968, when Politburo member D. S. Polyansky visited North Korea for the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the state, he noted that North Korea had contractual relations with the Soviet Union for "the joint defense of socialist gains, and the enemies should not forget this." 69/ The "joint defense" was almost certainly a reflection of Soviet insistence that the North Koreans not undertake unilateral action against the United States.

Soviet leaders may have, on this and other occasions, sought to persuade Pyongyang to release the Pueblo crew by Christmas. Being more sophisticated than the North Koreans in their understanding of Americans, they may have realized the favorable effect the crew's release at that season could have. They would also have been more sensitive to the threat posed by President-elect Nixon, who was to enter office in January. Moscow must have been relieved when the Pueblo crew passed across the "Bridge of No Return" at Panmunjom on December 23.

In its traditional year-end roundup of important events in 1968, Pravda on December 29 did not even mention the Pueblo. 70/ Clearly the Soviet Union meant to put this episode behind it as quickly as possible.

Soviet policy in the Pueblo case, then, was ambivalent. Caught between its fear of a confrontation with the United States and its desire to maintain credibility in Pyongyang and the Communist camp, Moscow made both conciliatory and belligerent moves. These moves were geared

in part to its American audience, and indications are that that audience was responsive. Washington quickly abandoned its military options, partly because it was already involved in Vietnam. But the Soviet Union's moderate military buildup probably contributed to U.S. caution, while conciliatory Soviet statements encouraged the Johnson administration to believe that the release of the Pueblo crew might be brought about by means short of war. Washington also understood that the Soviet Union's public position was meant to bolster its standing in Pyongyang. Also, the United States was extremely sensitive to the Soviet Union's fears about North Korean security and, even more, about its own. Soviet behavior in the Pueblo crisis--its public statements in behalf of North Korea and the nature and timing of its military buildup--probably clarified American understanding. In sum, Soviet objectives for its relation with the United States were well served.

Soviet belligerent statements and moves were also aimed at North Korea. There Moscow seems to have had less success. It did the minimum necessary, during the first week or two after the crisis developed, to preserve credibility in Pyongyang. The North Koreans undoubtedly wanted a much tougher Soviet response. Despite the fact that the Soviet response was tougher than that of Peking, North Korea appears to have given Moscow little payment for its pains.

Moreover, if the Soviet Union did in fact--during the Ponomarev and Polyansky visits--warn Pyongyang against taking future initiatives against the United States,

it failed to get the desired result. For within a short time the North Koreans had attacked another U.S. target: the EC-121.

Whether the Soviet Union anticipated such a North Korean move or not, in retrospect the Pueblo incident represents a landmark in the Soviet attitude toward North Korea: the point at which Moscow began to conclude that it could get little support from the North Koreans for its interests and abandoned efforts to conciliate them.

#### The Shooting Down of the EC-121

On April 15, 1969, less than four months after the Pueblo crew had been released, North Korean aircraft shot down an unarmed U.S. Navy EC-121 with thirty-one men aboard while the reconnaissance plane was off the North Korean coast.

The Nixon administration knew only that the plane had been missing for a couple of hours when a North Korean news agency report was monitored which said that the plane had been brought down by North Korean forces. The same day, North Korea proposed a meeting of the Korean Military Armistice Commission without specifying what it wished to discuss. A meeting was arranged for April 18.

The administration meanwhile ordered into the Sea of Japan Task Force 71, which was officially put at twenty-nine vessels but unofficially at close to forty; 71/ with four aircraft carriers (Enterprise, Ticonderoga, Ranger, and Hornet), carrying 256 war planes, it had more firepower than the U.S. Sixth Fleet 72/ and was a substantially larger force than

that sent after the Pueblo incident. Two other carriers, the Kitty Hawk and the Bon Homme Richard, were ordered from Hongkong to the Sea of Japan, and the battleship New Jersey, en route home from Vietnam, was diverted to the area. Other U.S. forces were put on alert. Further U.S. reconnaissance flights were temporarily suspended, however.

At the same time, the United States requested Soviet, Japanese, and South Korean help in looking for survivors of the EC-121 crash. The day the plane was shot down, Secretary of State Rogers met in Washington with Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin to ask for Soviet aid. The Soviet Union responded favorably and promptly to the American request. On April 16 two Soviet Destroyer-type ships in the Sea of Japan began to assist in the search and rescue effort. With U.S. aircraft from bases in Guam, the Philippines, Okinawa, and Japan, the Soviet ships spent three days helping to look for survivors. At one point, guided by a U.S. Navy patrol plane to some debris, one of the Soviet destroyers picked up the debris and described it by radio to a low-flying U.S. Hercules C-130. The Soviet ship invited the plane to photograph the wreckage of the EC-121. It then radioed a message to the departing U.S. plane, which said: "Soviet Destroyer, Red Banner Pacific Fleet, sends condolences in connection with the loss of your aircraft." 73/ Two days later, the Soviet ship gave the debris to a U.S. destroyer. On April 18, the United States publicly thanked the Soviet Union for its help. Two bodies but no survivors had been found. Also on April 18, the United States

and North Korea met at Panmunjom, as arranged. At that meeting, the U.S. negotiator, Air Force Major General James P. Knapp, read a statement protesting the North Korean action in shooting down the EC-121 and demanding that the North Koreans take measures to prevent such incidents in the future. 74/ In response, the North Koreans only demanded repeatedly to know to what unit the aircraft belonged.

The same day, President Nixon said at a nationally televised press conference that the United States was resuming its reconnaissance flights and that they would be protected. He contended that the EC-121 had been ninety miles off the North Korean coast when shot down and that at no time had it been closer than forty miles. He also spoke of the Soviet role in the incident, describing it as first

one of being of assistance to the United States in recovering the debris and looking for survivors. And we are most grateful to the Soviet Union for helping us in this respect. Our intelligence--and of course no one can be sure here--indicates that the Soviet Union was not aware that this attack was to be made. North Korea is not a nation that is predictable in terms of its actions. It is perhaps more than any other nation in the Communist bloc completely out of control of either the Soviet Union, or for that matter, Communist China....It was completely a surprise attack in every sense of the word and, therefore, did not give us the opportunity for protective actions that I would have taken had it been threatened. 75/

On April 26 Task Force 71 entered the Sea of Japan reinforced by jet fighters dispatched from Osan Air Base in South Korea. As the U.S. ships came in, three Soviet intelligence ships and three Soviet destroyers appeared. These carried out surveillance activities only. The Soviet



Union may also have put a standby force to sea; if so, it remained close to Vladivostok, out of contact with U.S. forces. On the evening of April 21 the Soviet Union complained orally to American officials in Washington and Moscow about the U.S. naval presence. The United States responded by explaining that the reinstituted reconnaissance flights needed protection, emphasizing that it was North Korea (not the Soviet Union) that had brought down the EC-121. 76/ On April 22 Washington publicized the Soviet protests.

On April 26 the United States announced that it was withdrawing Task Force 71 south of Korea to the Yellow Sea. A government spokesman said that North Korea had been sent a message that retaliation might follow future shootings. 77/ The New Jersey returned to the United States at this time. Shortly thereafter, Task Force 71 was reduced to eight ships.

#### North Korean Action

As with the seizure of the Pueblo, the shooting down of the EC-121 seems to have been on North Korean initiative alone. In April 1969 the North was still actively pursuing its militant policy of attempting to undermine the Seoul regime by force.

The attempted assassination of President Park and the attack on the Pueblo had increased tension between South Korea and the United States. After these events, Seoul undoubtedly wanted to take retaliatory military action. The Park regime must have felt a stop should be put to the North's

continuing probes once and for all. Certainly, Washington seems to have feared a South Korean move in this direction, for it avoided calling in South Korean aircraft under the UN Command.

When the United States protested to the United Nations about the Pueblo seizure, the South Koreans entered a protest of their own, condemning the attempted assassination of President Park. After the United States agreed to enter in to private talks with North Korea, the South Korean government radio said U.S. policy had aroused "burning indignation and resentment on the part of the ROK people." 78/ Seoul wanted some expression of U.S. concern about its own situation in the face of North Korean attacks. The major Seoul newspaper warned against U.S. "connivance" at the Pueblo affair. 79/ Soon after, anti-American demonstrations erupted in Seoul and along the DMZ for the first time since the Korean War, and the South Korean National Assembly unanimously passed a resolution strongly critical of the United States. 80/

Meeting with U.S. Ambassador William J. Porter and Commander of UN Forces General Charles Bonesteel, South Korean Premier Chung Il Kwon demanded that the problem of infiltration from North Korea to the South take precedence over the Pueblo case, that South Korea be included in all negotiations, and that the United States increase its aid to Seoul beyond the amount projected by President Johnson. 81/ Seoul also wanted an improvement of the 1953 mutual defense treaty to provide for "immediate and automatic" U.S. response to a common U.S.-South Korean danger, 82/ and the reassignment of South Korean forces from the UN Command to purely

South Korean control. The United States resisted these demands then and during a February 11 visit by President Johnson's special envoy, Deputy Secretary of Defense Cyrus R. Vance, to Seoul.

Yet U.S. aid to South Korea was increased. A few weeks after the Pueblo incident, President Johnson reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to defend South Korea against Communist aggression and asked Congress for \$100 million in emergency military aid for Seoul. Later, he promised aid to South Korea's new Homeland Defense Corps. Within a few weeks, nearly 200 U.S. jets were flown to South Korean airfields from Japan, Okinawa, Guam, and Hawaii, and specialists and spare parts were sent to two U.S. Army divisions in South Korea. South Korea also received a destroyer, air-defense missiles, radios, anti-infiltration devices, and ammunition. 83/

Meanwhile, the Park regime announced that it was going to build up the South Korean militia to 2.5 million men. By March 14, more than 1.6 million reservists were organized and the remainder were scheduled to be mustered by the end of the month. In addition, the ROK armed forces were brought to their full strength of 623,000 men by delaying discharges. 84/

All this must have been worrying to North Korea, which seems to have concluded it had to act quickly if it expected ever to take the South. In August 1968 the South Korean CIA announced the discovery of a large Communist underground, whose members were said to have made repeated journeys to the North and to have met with North Korean leaders, including

Kim Il-Sung. Later in the year, on November 3, a party of at least sixty North Korean commandos landed on the east coast of South Korea near Ulchin in what the Seoul government thought to be part of an effort to establish bases for permanent guerilla operations in the South. According to accounts by the captives, they had been ordered to recruit South Koreans for subversion, terrorism, and sabotage. The North Korean commandos held at least one village before they were cleaned out by South Korean military, police, and security forces. 85/ The following month, South Korean President Park warned at a national security meeting in Seoul that North Korea had begun a new type of irregular war.

These North Korean actions were combined with three armed clashes initiated by Pyongyang in the DMZ in October and with the replacement, in December, of Defense Minister Kim Ch'ang-bong by General Ch'oe Hyon, widely regarded as Pyongyang's top guerrilla warfare strategist. 86/ The militants evidently were gaining strength in the North Korean capital. One Western analyst asserts that the U.S. failure to retaliate in the Pueblo incident had strengthened the militant policy of the "hawks" in the North Korean leadership. 87/

In mid-March 1969 the United States began an operation called "Focus Retina," the airlift of 1,200 U.S. combat troops from North Carolina to South Korea to participate with South Korean soldiers in maneuvers against a "surprise attack from a third country," clearly North

Korea. This move especially appears to have heightened North Korean fear and anger; for on April 16, the day after the EC-121 was shot down, a Pyongyang broadcast spoke of "Focus Retina" as being "very provocative." 88/ From the North Korean capital it probably seemed that, with the Vietnam War beginning to wind down, the United States was turning its attention to Korea and that time was not in Pyongyang's favor.

Meanwhile, North Korea's relations with the two Communist super-powers had not improved since the time of the Pueblo's seizure; if anything, they were even cooler. After the Ponomarev visit to Pyongyang in February 1968, the Soviet Union had doubled North Korea's SAM sites, reaffirmed the Soviet defense commitment, and increased economic assistance to the North. It was on its way to becoming North Korea's largest trading partner. North Korea had promptly and unqualifiedly endorsed the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, as was consistent with Pyongyang's opposition to liberal pressure in the Communist bloc. But North Korea had failed to get from the Soviet Union the kind of support it had undoubtedly sought after the Pueblo incident. Probably to show his unhappiness, Kim Il-Sung refused to give in to the request reportedly made by Ponomarev that North Korea send a representative to the April Budapest conference, which was to prepare for the international conference of Communist parties scheduled for Moscow later in the year. 89/

Thus the Pueblo incident seems to have left both sides frustrated with one another. The Soviet Union must have been warier than ever of its North Korean ally. The Pueblo's seizure had humiliated the United

States and caused some strain in U.S.-South Korean and U.S.-Japanese relations. 90/ It had given Moscow a certain edge over Peking with Pyongyang, and it may have netted the Soviet Union useful intelligence information. But it had complicated the Soviet Union's tenuous political relations with both the United States and Japan. 91/ It had led to greater aid to South Korea and justified Johnson's calling up the reserve at home, a move he had long wished to make. It had brought a large U.S. military force into the Sea of Japan, within reach of vital Soviet territory and installations in the Far East. Most important, the seizure of the Pueblo demonstrated that North Korea was ready to take, without Soviet knowledge, unilateral actions that could involve the USSR in a military confrontation with the United States. The Russians had not been happy when China, a major ally, had gotten them into such a predicament. They must have been doubly unhappy to have a minor ally, North Korea, threaten to take them to war. Moreover, Moscow must have been irritated that Pyongyang had resisted attempts to nudge it away from Peking.

Meanwhile, North Korean relations with China had not yet improved beyond the "formal" stage of early 1968. China could not have liked the fact that Moscow rendered comparatively greater support to Pyongyang in the crisis and was supplying North Korea militarily. This was not a situation in which China could feel friendly toward North Korea, since China's own relations with the Soviet Union were deteriorating at the time.

The Chinese Communist party newspaper had condemned the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968, calling it a "shameless act." 92/ Although Czechoslovakia's "revisionist" policies were not to China's liking, Peking clearly feared that the Soviet action might provide a precedent for similar action against its own territory--something particularly to be feared after the "Brezhnev doctrine" of November justifying Soviet intervention in socialist countries and in light of Soviet activities in Sinkiang and along China's western border.

In March 1969 armed Sino-Soviet incidents developed on the Ussuri River dividing China and the Soviet Union. The EC-121 may have been monitoring these incidents before it was shot down. 93/ China was deeply involved in its dispute with the USSR and would not have wanted a conflict with the United States on the Korean peninsula. China was, in any case, still preoccupied with internal problems. Liu Shao-chi had been expelled from the Communist party in November 1968, culminating a campaign waged by the radical Red Guard against "revisionists." The Chinese Communist party was preparing to meet for the first time since 1958 to adopt a new party constitution and elect a presidium, central committee, and politburo. This congress began on April 1, 1969. North Korea had not sent a representative.

On April 23, after the EC-121 was shot down, P'yongyang issued a statement contending that the United States was seeking to provoke a new war. "The entire Korean people and the people's army," the statement said, "must sharpen their revolutionary vigilance and be fully prepared

to return retaliation for retaliation and all-out war for all-out war." 94/ U.S. analysts thought at the time that the statement was aimed at the Soviet Union and China as much as at the United States. Again, frustrated by the lack of support it was getting from its two Communist allies, particularly after the successful Pueblo attack, Pyongyang appears to have acted alone.

April 15 was Kim Il-Sung's fifty-seventh birthday. Shooting down the EC-121 on that day could have been a way of commemorating the event. David Willis of the Christian Science Monitor speculated at the time Kim may not have known of the attack before it occurred: as of April 19, Kim had not said a single word about it, there were few statement in the North Korean press and radio about it, and the North Koreans' opening statement at Panmunjom did not even refer to it. Noting that this was in strange contrast to North Korean reports after the Pueblo crisis, Willis suggested that the attack on the U.S. plane may have been on the initiative of Defense Minister Ch'oe Hyon as a birthday gift to Kim. 95/ Americans at Panmunjom supported this notion. They thought that the North Koreans seemed confused about their instructions and speculated that someone in Pyongyang may have made a mistake in calling for the meeting. They too wondered if Ch'oe had acted on his own initiative against the wishes of other North Korean leaders. 96/

If Ch'oe did act independently, he may have had more than one domestic purpose in mind. First, taking place when it did, the incident could have bolstered his standing with Kim, by contributing to the cult



of personality Kim had built around himself. Then, on April 17, Ch'oe commended the 896th army unit for bringing the plane down "with one shot." 97/ He may have been trying to shore up moral in the North Korean army by hinting to North Korean soldiers and their foreign enemies alike that Pyongyang had units capable of successfully firing surface-to-air missiles, then being supplied by the Soviet Union.

On April 18 an editorial in Nodong Sinmun called for heightened North Korean vigilance and maintenance of a constant state of mobilization and stressed the importance of stepping up military and political training. It spoke of President Nixon as the "new boss of the U.S. imperialists, ranting that a third world war will break out not in Europe but in Asia." These comments may well have reflected the fear, of some North Korean leaders at least, that after years of austerity and militancy the North Korean population was beginning to slacken its efforts and let down its guard. In view of U.S. restraint in the Pueblo crisis, shooting down an unarmed U.S. plane may have been judged an easy way to boost North Korean military preparedness.

#### U.S. Response: Military Force and Political Sensitivity

The attack on EC-121, like the seizure of the Pueblo, took the United States by surprise despite a warning. 98/ The Defense Department explained this by saying such flights had been flown in the Sea of Japan for more than twenty years with few incidents and that in the first three

months of 1969 there had been 190 similar flights in the area that had not been attacked. 99/ Although the United States was confident that neither the Russians nor the Chinese were involved, Nixon's advisers urged caution. The military men were aware of the risks of military action, which could have precipitated war at a time when the United States was still engaged in Vietnam. The civilians also favored restraint. Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird, for example, was described as "not enthusiastic" about air strikes. 100/ Secretary of State Rogers said the next day: "The weak can be rash; the powerful must be more restrained," and spoke of acting "responsibly" in the crisis. 101/ Aside from a few hard-liners, most of Congress called for caution. Public opinion also supported a restrained response, although this time there was no question of retrieving hostages.

After considering a series of military options, 102/ therefore, the administration quickly turned to a policy combining a dramatic show of military force with a low-keyed political stance that was conciliatory, especially toward the Soviet Union. On the one hand, the administration ordered Task Force 71--with its 40 vessels and 256 warplanes--into the Sea of Japan. It denounced the North Korean attack, warning Pyongyang not to attempt to repeat it because U.S. military power represented by the task force would be prepared for a quick response. 103/ And on April 18 President Nixon announced that the United States was resuming its reconnaissance flights, this time with fighter escorts.

On the other hand, at his April 18 press conference, President Nixon publicly acknowledged Soviet assistance in the search and rescue

operation and absolved the Soviet Union from any responsibility for the attack. The United States did not raise the issue at the United Nations for fear such a move might force the Russians to publicly support North Korea, as they had in the case of the Pueblo. Washington also made a point of specifying that Task Force 71 was aimed at warning North Korea, not the Soviet Union, not to interfere with future reconnaissance flights.

In other words, the administration did everything it could to separate the Soviet Union from the attack while making a show of military strength designed mainly for political effect in Pyongyang. Washington's position was made possible by the Soviet Union's initial conciliatory response to the attack.

#### Soviet Disenchantment with North Korea

At the time of the attack the Soviet Union was pursuing detente and discussing with the United States a range of issues that would affect Soviet planning for years to come. In May 1968 the two countries had ratified a consular convention. Two months later they had, with Britain and fifty-nine nonnuclear nations, signed the nuclear nonproliferation treaty and agreed to open talks "in the nearest future" on limiting and reducing offensive and defensive missiles. Relations between Moscow and Washington appeared to be on the upswing as the end of the Vietnam War came in sight.

Moscow had just carried out its invasion of Czechoslovakia. Militarily, it was trying to stabilize the situation there, and politically, it was still marshaling Communist bloc support for its action. It also was preparing for the world conference of Communist parties to be held in Moscow in June 1969.

Moscow was more and more on the defensive against Peking. Chinese criticism of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia had hampered Soviet efforts to make that move palatable to other Communist countries, and China's continuing attacks--both verbal and actual on the eastern border were a constant irritant. In October 1968 it was reported that the Soviet Union had established missile bases in Outer Mongolia on the Chinese border. 104/ The same month the Soviet Union sent journalist Victor Louis to Taiwan, the first time in nineteen years a Soviet citizen had visited the island. Going even further, Moscow received a member of Chiang Kai-shek's Chinese Nationalist party. Then in March 1969, after the first skirmishes along the Ussuri River, Moscow bitterly attacked China in Kommunist, contending that China was attempting nuclear blackmail of its Asian neighbors. 105/ The Kremlin followed this up with an April 11 proposal for the renewal of Sino-Soviet border talks; Western analysts thought this overture was designed mainly to show up the Chinese. 106/

In this situation, the Soviet Union could hardly have welcomed another North Korean attack on the United States. Besides going against Moscow's probable warnings to Pyongyang after the Pueblo incident, such a

move would have been unwelcome because by this time the Russians must have seen that a unified Communist Korea was not in their interests.

One can only guess whether the Russians welcomed Nixon's acknowledgment of their help in the search for survivors. 107/ They may not have wanted attention called to their help; in their own press they did not report it. But they must have been gratified when Nixon absolved the Soviet Union of any responsibility for the attack, since this suggested that the Soviet-U.S. dialogue could continue undisturbed. And they must have been relieved that the United States did not raise the issue at the United Nations, where they would have been forced by North Korea's continued absence to present its case.

When the EC-121 incident occurred, the Soviet press picked up the April 15 KCNA report of it. Next day, the purportedly unofficial Radio Peace and Progress broadcast in English to Asia gave some support to Pyongyang's contention that the plane had intruded into North Korean airspace; and an April 17 Radio Moscow broadcast in Korean did the same. But the Soviet Union's strongest support of North Korea did not come until April 18, when an Izvestiya article said that the Pentagon had "prepared loopholes in advance in the event of various kinds of accusations and declared that the crew of the aircraft had instructions to keep 60 miles from the limits of DPRK airspace." The article added that since the Pueblo episode "this sort of declaration is not taken seriously even in Congress." However, there was no support for North Korea's contention that its self-defense had been "legitimate." 108/

Moscow protested Task Force 71's entry into the Sea of Japan only mildly and orally; it was though in Washington that its protests on April 21 were pro forma and made mainly to express Soviet solidarity with North Korea. 109/ Perhaps to help the Soviet Union as well as to avert any stronger Soviet response, Washington publicized the protests.

It is not clear to what degree the Russians feared for their own security at the time. U.S. behavior in the Pueblo case and President Nixon's assurance that Task Force 71 was directed against North Korea only should have allayed their fear. This is probably why they assembled such a small naval force in the Sea of Japan. At the same time, they could not be sure what the newly elected, "hard-line" U.S. President might do, particularly since the U.S. buildup was so large.

In any case, the Soviet Union could not permit the North Koreans to take risks that might involve it. On May 14, just a few weeks after the EC-121 was shot down, the Russians sent a delegation headed by Soviet President Nikolai V. Podgorny to Pyongyang for a few days. 110/ There seems little doubt that Podgorny expressed Soviet disapproval of the new North Korean action to Kim Il-Sung. Repeating Polyansky's September 1963 remarks, Podgorny spoke of the need for "collective action" to repel U.S. warships and planes and noted that North Korea had contractual relations with the Soviet Union for the "joint defense of socialist gains and the enemies should not forget this." 111/

In sharp contrast to the line then coming from Pyongyang, Podgorny stressed the need for, and the tactical utility of, a relaxation of tension in the Far East. In a line pointedly omitted from the North Korean

version of Podgorny's speech, the Soviet leader said: "Experience shows that periods of relaxation of tension in international relations and the implementing of the principles of peaceful coexistence in the final analysis have always been more beneficial for socialism and the national liberation movement than for imperialism." 112/

Finally, all of Podgorny's speeches in North Korea emphasized the need for "peaceful" reunification of Korea. They mentioned the Soviet-Korean mutual defense treaty only as the basis of friendship between the two countries, not in the context of the U.S. "imperialist" threat, as North Korean media usually spoke of the treaty.

One purpose of Podgorny's visit to North Korea after the shooting down of the EC-121 was thus to express Moscow's displeasure at North Korea's unilateral actions and to try to convince the North Koreans that they could achieve their goals better through peaceful than through violent means. 113/ Podgorny may have spoken even more bluntly to the North Koreans in private. For after the EC-121 incident the number of cases of North Korean subversions and violence across the demilitarized zone fell sharply, from 761 in 1968 to 134 in 1969. 114/

The Russians also sought to gain North Korean support against China. After his visit to North Korea, Podgorny visited Outer Mongolia, apparently as part of a concerted Soviet effort to consolidate relations with Asian allies after the border clashes with the Chinese the previous year. To get North Korean support against Peking, Podgorny evidently felt he must make some gesture to Pyongyang, and he signed a joint

communique with Kim Il-Sung that was harder on "U.S. imperialism" than Soviet propaganda usually was. 115/ Beyond this limited gesture he did not go.

The Chinese were quick to sense the situation and profit from it. Peking's reaction to the EC-121 incident was to try to make points about Soviet-American collusion. The Chinese were slowly beginning to follow a more pragmatic foreign policy after the excesses of the Cultural Revolution had worsened relations with Pyongyang and other states. Although Peking responded to the incident with praise for North Korea, 116/ most of its comment was criticism of the Soviet response. It particularly ensured Soviet willingness to assist the United States in the search for survivors and debris, and asserted that a U.S. official had said: "Russian willingness to render assistance has been astonishing. From the way they are doing things at present they look like allies instead of opponents in the cold war." 117/ The Chinese press agency NCNA called the assistance "servile compliance" and "a new ugly performance of U.S.-Soviet collusion." 118/

On the whole, then, the Soviet Union wanted to preserve its relationship with the United States while offering Pyongyang aid and support as an incentive to move away from Peking (though it was clearly giving up hope of bringing the North Koreans around).

Under these circumstances, Moscow decided to help the United States look for survivors. Its support of North Korean arguments was equivocal. Despite the large U.S. military buildup, the Soviet Union made only a token military response, and this was designed to gather



information on U.S. intentions. Three of the six Soviet ships were intelligence vessels; the other three, destroyers, may only have been intended to ensure their security. The Soviet military response also was meant both to remind the United States that Moscow viewed with disfavor such a large buildup close to Soviet territory and to reassure the United States that the Soviet Union had nothing to do with initiating the incident. Finally, the small size of the Soviet naval presence was a warning to Kim Il-Sung that Moscow was not going to encourage him in such provocative action, particularly at a time when it was engaged in fruitful negotiations with the United States and armed conflict with China.

The Soviet Union appears to have succeeded in its objectives with the United States. Its naval presence probably reinforced the U.S. decision not to take retaliatory military action. Task Force 71 was quickly moved out of the Sea of Japan, and Washington was reassured that the Russians had not helped precipitate the EC-121 incident. Soviet objectives in Pyongyang were probably less well realized. Support for North Korea was the minimum necessary to preserve the Soviet-North Korean relationship.

The Soviet campaign for "collective security" in Asia dates from 1969. It has generally been interpreted as an anti-Chinese club, a means of containing China's growing independence and likely future influence in Asia. After the Pueblo and EC-121 incidents, it probably also reflected Soviet anxiety that tension on the Korean peninsula might embroil the USSR in war against its best interests. The Soviet

Union must have felt under increasing pressure to prevent this through some sort of cooperative arrangement that would contain the tension.

### The Poplar Tree Incident

Seven years after the North Koreans shot down the EC-121, North Korean soldiers axed and clubbed to death two U.S. Army officers on duty at the DMZ.

The episode began on July 23, 1976, when the UN Command in Korea (manned mainly by Americans) advised the Korean People's Army (KPA) and the Military Armistice Commission that UN personnel would be in the Joint Security Area (JSA) during August for construction, beautification, and routine maintenance. 119/ Not long after, UN forces surveyed a poplar tree that had long been a problem for UN guards because it obstructed the view from one observation post to another. It was decided that the tree would be cut down.

On August 6 a UN work crew attempted to do this, but it was warned off by a KPA guard. The crew then withdrew, reporting the situation to JSA commander Lieutenant Colonel Victor S. Vierra, who noted that any further work on the tree might require special precautions. It was also determined that the tree could be merely trimmed, not cut down.

Accordingly, on the morning of August 18 Vierra sent a reinforced work detail of fifteen men to trim the tree. The detail was headed by

Captain Arthur G. Bonifas and included one other U.S. officer and South Korean Army Captain Kim. Vierra also made arrangements for monitoring the operation and for quick reaction in case of trouble.

The group entered the Joint Security Area in a truck and drove to the deserted poplar. Within a minute, two North Korean army officers and nine guards arrived in a similar truck. Captain Kim told the KPA the work detail meant to trim, not fell, the tree. The head of the KPA group, later identified as Lieutenant Pak Chul, a seven-to-eight year JSA veteran, replied that this was "good." The North Koreans then proceeded to comment on the tree trimming, while other North Korean guards gathered at the scene. When the work was nearly done, Pak told Captain Bonifas to stop, warning him there might be trouble if he did not. Captain Bonifas directed that the work continue. Lieutenant Pak sent a runner, apparently for more North Korean guards. Soon after, a second North Korean army truck arrived with eight to ten guards, and other guards moved to the scene, bringing the total of North Koreans to nearly thirty. Pak again directed that the work stop, saying, "The branches that are cut will be of no use, just as you will be after you die." Captain Bonifas told his men to continue working. Meanwhile, JSA commander Vierra, monitoring the situation in the rear, called the UN command post closest to the scene and told the men there to tell Bonifas to stop work. As this order was given, however, Pak attacked Captain Bonifas with his feet. Several North Korean guards then jumped on Bonifas and beat him, and the remaining guards attacked the UN security force, first with

fists and feet and then with clubs and metal pipes from the back of their truck and the axes being used to trim the tree. Within minutes, two U.S. Army officers--Bonifas and First Lieutenant Mark. T. Barrett--were dead, and nine other men in the UN force were wounded. (The North Koreans later claimed casualties of their own.)

General Richard G. Stilwell, commander of UN and U.S. forces in Korea, learned of the events almost as they occurred; he returned to Korea from Japan, where he was touring Japanese self-defense forces, the same evening. The U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, the White House, and Secretary of State Kissinger were all advised immediately. Shortly thereafter, President Ford was informed in Kansas City, where he was attending the Republican National Convention. He expressed strong indignation over the murders. Within a day, the administration was considering a range of possible alternative responses to the North Korean action. These included doing nothing; staging a show of force by U.S. units in Korea; deploying forces from other Pacific units to Korea; deploying a squadron of fighters from the United States to Korea; sending an aircraft carrier to Korean waters; increasing the combat readiness of U.S. forces; and carrying out a retaliatory action. The administration decided to make a show of force.

The same day, the State Department demanded that North Korea accept responsibility for the killings, provide assurances that such incidents would not occur in future, and punish the men responsible. Secretary of State Kissinger met with both the Japanese and Chinese representatives in Washington and was in touch almost immediately with

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fists and feet and then with clubs and metal pipes from the back of their truck and the axes being used to trim the tree. Within minutes, two U.S. Army officers--Bonifas and First Lieutenant Mark. T. Barrett--were dead, and nine other men in the UN force were wounded. (The North Koreans later claimed casualties of their own.)

General Richard G. Stilwell, commander of UN and U.S. forces in Korea, learned of the events almost as they occurred; he returned to Korea from Japan, where he was touring Japanese self-defense forces, the same evening. The U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, the White House, and Secretary of State Kissinger were all advised immediately. Shortly thereafter, President Ford was informed in Kansas City, where he was attending the Republican National Convention. He expressed strong indignation over the murders. Within a day, the administration was considering a range of possible alternative responses to the North Korean action. These included doing nothing; staging a show of force by U.S. units in Korea; deploying forces from other Pacific units to Korea; deploying a squadron of fighters from the United States to Korea; sending an aircraft carrier to Korean waters; increasing the combat readiness of U.S. forces; and carrying out a retaliatory action. The administration decided to make a show of force.

The same day, the State Department demanded that North Korea accept responsibility for the killings, provide assurances that such incidents would not occur in future, and punish the men responsible. Secretary of State Kissinger met with both the Japanese and Chinese representatives in Washington and was in touch almost immediately with

the Soviet ambassador. Kissinger apparently obtained Japanese consent to the deployment of Japan-based U.S. forces. He probably assured the Chinese and Russian ambassadors that any military actions the United States undertook would be aimed solely at North Korea. He may also have urged the Chinese and Russians to put pressure on North Korean leader Kim Il-Sung to meet the U.S. demands. He reportedly emerged confident from his talks with Chinese Ambassador Huang Chen that China would not give material support to Pyongyang. 120/

By August 19 a squadron of F-4 phantom fighter planes had arrived in South Korea from Okinawa; the alert status of U.S. forces in Korea had been raised to defense condition 3 and flights from Guam to Korea were made by B-52s; an F-111 squadron was on its way from Idaho, supported by KC-135 refueling aircraft; and Task Group 77.4, comprising the aircraft carrier Midway and four frigates, was sent from Japan to the area. Most of these forces were in place by early morning, August 21. Then, at General Stilwell's suggestion and with Washington's approval but with little notice to North Korea, U.S. and South Korean troops carried out Operation Paul Bunyan: cutting down the poplar tree.

Within the hour, North Korea's senior representative to the Military Armistice Commission, Major General Han Ju-kyong, requested a private meeting with the U.S. representative to the Military Armistice Commission at Panmunjom, Rear Admiral Mark P. Frudden, to convey a message from his supreme commander, Kim Il-Sung. This meeting took place at noon the same day, when General Han passed along the

following statement for delivery to General Stilwell:

It is a good thing that no big incident occurred at Pan Mun Jom for a long period. However, it is regretful that an incident occurred in the Joint Security Area, Pan Mun Jom this time. An effort must be made so that such incidents may not recur in the future. For this purpose both sides should make efforts. We urge your side to prevent the provocation. Our side will never provoke first, but take self-defensive measures only when provocation occurs. This is our consistent stand. 121/

General Han added that the cutting down of the tree that morning had been a serious provocation and that measures should be taken on the United Nations side to avoid such provocations in the future. The message he transmitted was the first personal message from Kim to the UN commander in the twenty-three year history of the Korean armistice. After a brief delay, the State Department, revealing that the message had been sent, called it a "positive step." For several days, however, B-52 bombers continued to fly daily "practice bombing missions" over South Korea and flew three at a time between South Korea and their bases in Guam. On September 6, after nearly two weeks of meetings, the UN Command and North Korea concluded an agreement in Panmunjom on new security arrangements for the truce area. 122/ The same day, the Midway left the Sea of Japan. On September 7 U.S. forces in Korea were returned to normal alert status. The rest of Task Group 77.4 left the Sea of Japan on October 12. No Russian military buildup during the entire period is reported.



### The 1976 Setting

These events took place in a political climate quite different from that which prevailed during the Pueblo and EC-121 crises. First, earlier North Korean provocations had been counterproductive. The EC-121 crisis had led, among other things, to an affirmation of Japanese support for the U.S. position 123/ and increased U.S. military aid to Seoul. 124/

Second, by 1976 Soviet-North Korean relations were extremely strained. In March 1970, scientific cooperation between the two countries had broken down. Later that year, at the Fifth Party Congress in Pyongyang, North Korea attacked "revisionism" for "yielding to U.S. imperialism," clearly an attack on the Soviet Union for pursuing detente.

The Russians had never acknowledged Kim's pretensions to being a "creative" thinker. They did not quote him or use his name in connection with North Korean accomplishments, a practice in marked contrast with that of North Korean media, which had built up a Kim cult surpassing the cults of both Stalin and Mao. For an egomaniac like Kim, this must have rankled. He responded by ranking visiting Soviet delegations lower than Chinese. 125/

The Russians took a bold step in September 1971, when, for the first time since the division of Korea at the end of World War II, a Soviet citizen, Igor A. Neto, entered South Korea. North Korea immediately protested the action, warning Moscow not to engage in

contacts of any kind with the Republic of Korea. But after the Neto visit, the Soviet Union issued passports to several South Korean businessmen, a few scientists, and a dramatist. In August 1973 North Korea boycotted the Universiade (World University Games) in Moscow because the Russians were allowing a South Korean team to participate. In September 1975 the Soviet Union also granted entry visas to South Korean sportsmen.

By 1975 the signs of discord were unmistakable. The most dramatic was Kim's failure to visit Moscow during his first trip outside Korea in ten years, which took him to China, Eastern Europe, and North Africa. The only close ally he visited was Bulgaria, and the North Korean-Bulgarian communique suggests that substantial differences existed between the two countries. 126/

After this episode Russian and North Korean relations continued to cool, with the media of both countries consistently playing down anniversary occasions that in the past had been used to stress friendly relations between the two. In August 1975, on the thirtieth anniversary of the Soviet liberation of North Korea, Pyongyang disparaged the value of Soviet aid to North Korea since 1945. No high-level Soviet delegation went to North Korea for that occasion. 127/ A month later, the twenty-seventh anniversary of the nation's founding was not attended by a Soviet delegation, nor was the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the Korean Workers (Communist) party. Only three Communist

states--Rumania, Cuba, and Hungary--sent delegations to commemorate the latter occasion and Kim snubbed the closest Soviet ally, Hungary. 128/ Pyongyang treated the fifty-eighth anniversary of the Russian Revolution coolly. 129/

Meanwhile, after reaching a high in the early 1970s, trade between the two countries stagnated. The Soviet Union did little to help North Korea out of its economic difficulties resulting from heavy defense expenditures, but instead attempted to use trade as a political weapon to gain Pyongyang's support in the Sino-Soviet dispute. 130/ After completing the program of military assistance to North Korea it had begun before the Pueblo incident, the Soviet Union did not undertake any major new military commitments. 131/

By contrast, Chinese-North Korean relations improved from April 1969 on. Unlike the Russians, the Chinese acknowledged Kim Il-Sung's greatness as a leader, quoting him generously. At the October 1969 celebrations in Peking, for example, the North Korean delegation was met at the airport by Premier Chou En-lai although North Korea had belatedly decided to attend; moreover, after the opening day North Korea appeared first on official lists of visiting delegations. 132/

In 1970 the North Korean ambassador to China reappeared after an absence of two years, after which Chou visited Pyongyang, his first trip abroad after the end of the Cultural Revolution. Other high-level Chinese visits followed. Subsequently, the Chinese dropped the claim to North Korean territory that they had advanced during the

### Cultural Revolution.

In July 1971 China attended, for the first time since 1966, a meeting of the Korean Military Armistice Commission. Soon after, Mao sent a message to North Korea's Kim on the tenth anniversary of the Chinese-Korean friendship treaty assuring North Korea of joint military aid.

China was even partially successful in selling its own policy of detente to North Korea. After the visit of President Nixon to China had been planned but before he went, Li Teh-sheng, an alternate member of the Chinese politburo and director of the People's Liberation Army general political department, visited North Korea. Possibly he told the North Koreans about the prospective visit, explaining the trip as a sign of U.S. weakness and arguing that it would help China offset the growing threat from Japan feared by both Peking and Pyongyang. 133/ The North Koreans probably did not like the move, but they swallowed it. After a month, Kim commented on the planned visit, saying that Nixon was going to Peking with a "white flag." 134/

In April 1975 Kim visited Peking for the first time in fourteen years and met with the ailing and rarely seen Mao. In the communique that resulted from this visit, the Chinese, unlike the Russians, backed Kim's claim that North Korea was the "sole and legal sovereign state of the Korean nation," but they indicated that they would support only "peaceful reunification," not any plans Kim might have for forcibly taking over South Korea. When Kim spoke of intervening in South Korea,

Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-ping asserted several times that reunification must be by peaceful means. Other Chinese statements stressed North Korean military strength rather than joint Chinese-North Korean military action.

Peking was preoccupied during this entire period with its struggle with the Soviet Union and, as the Chinese dialogue with Washington developed, with maintaining that link as a possible counter to Soviet power. Although Chinese-North Korean relations were improving, the Chinese remained cautious about North Korean interests, and Pyongyang must have been well aware of this.

Since neither Moscow nor Peking was willing to give much support to North Korea's efforts to get the United States out of South Korea and take over the South, Kim evidently decided to try direct pressure on both Washington and Seoul. In 1972, for example, he told an American journalist--one of three allowed into North Korea that year--that "Washington should improve relations not only with big countries but with small countries as well." <sup>135/</sup> The following April North Korea appealed to the U.S. Congress for withdrawal of the 40,000 U.S. troops then stationed in South Korea. In March 1974 Pyongyang proposed a bilateral peace agreement with the United States to supersede the 1953 Korean armistice agreement. Meanwhile, it tried to win over the American public by running ads in the New York Times and other papers with statements and pictures of a benevolent-looking Kim Il-Sung.

These efforts, however, drew little American response. In mid-1975 President Ford decided to make a show of force in Asia by

rescuing the commercial container ship Mayaguez from the Khmer (Communist) forces that had just taken over Cambodia. Administration officials made it clear that one of the aims of the operation was to deter North Korean adventurism. Soon after, Secretary of State Kissinger reaffirmed the U.S. defense commitment to South Korea.

Evidently not completely discouraged, North Korea asked Japanese Premier Miki to help arrange talks between Pyongyang and Washington regarding an agreement to replace the existing Korean armistice accord. President Ford responded in his Pacific doctrine, announced in Honolulu in December, explicitly rejecting North Korean overtures for a separate agreement with the United States that would exclude South Korea. In the intervening period, on June 30, 1975, North Korean guards in the DMZ had surrounded, knocked unconscious, and seriously injured a U.S. army major during a Military Armistice Commission meeting. The incident involved Pak Chul, then a sergeant, of the KPA.

North Korea had little more success with South Korea. A dialogue developed between the two governments in April 1971 when, after overtures by Seoul, North Korean Foreign Minister Ho Dam unveiled an "eight-point program" for reunification that made certain concessions to the South. 136/ On August 21 Nodong Shinmun called for unification of Korea by peaceful means "without interference of outside forces." 137/ Also in August, North and South Korean Red Cross representatives held their first meeting to discuss contacts between members of families and

relatives separated by the Korean War.

A year later Kim Il-Sung indicated to visiting Washington Post correspondent Selig E. Harrison that he was willing to meet with South Korean President Park. 138/ The next month, it was announced that high-level officials of the two governments had met and agreed on the principle of reunification, without outside interference, which was to set up a joint coordinating committee to solve various North-South problems and "not to slander or defame each other." The same day, a telephone hot line was opened between Pyongyang and Seoul. This June 1972 meeting was the high point of North Korean-South Korean contacts.

Almost immediately, the two sides gave differing interpretations of their joint statement. In October North Korea virulently attacked South Korea's ruling elite. 139/ Soon after, in March 1973, North-South talks broke down. In August 1974 President Park's wife died of wounds received in an assassination attempt probably initiated by Pyongyang.

By late 1974-early 1975 North Korea was showing a new militancy, born in part no doubt of its continuing economic problems. In 1972 Pyongyang had had to cut its defense spending sharply. It also had difficulty paying its foreign debts; in October 1975 it managed to have its debts rescheduled only by agreeing to prepay the interest on them.

There was one area in which North Korea did have some success in this period: wooing the third world and other countries in an attempt to isolate and undermine the Park regime. In 1972 North Korea established diplomatic relations with six countries and received visits from representatives of others. The following year relations were established with nearly a dozen more third world countries and with several European countries as well. Pyongyang also gained admission to various international bodies, including the World Health Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. It obtained status as a permanent observer at the United Nations. And it won a victory in the UN when the General Assembly passed two rival Korean resolutions: a U.S.-backed resolution calling for both Koreas to continue the North-South dialogue, and a pro-North Korean resolution advocating dissolution of the UN Command, negotiation of a peace treaty between the United States and North Korea, and the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Korea.

In mid-1975 Kim traveled to North Africa and Europe. In August North Korea gained admission to the conference of nonaligned countries in Lima. The next month, the UN Security Council refused for the second time to consider South Korea's application for admission. By this time, the North had diplomatic relations with nearly ninety countries, forty-four more than in 1972. 140/

It was against the backdrop of all these developments that the poplar tree murders took place. The year 1976 began with a rise in



the number of incidents near the DMZ, and tension built as summer approached.

In February Soviet Communist Party leader Leonid Brezhnev made a lengthy report on the world situation to the Twenty-fifth CPS Congress in which he did not refer to the Korean question and included only one reference to Pyongyang in a ceremonial list of "fraternal Socialist states." 141/ Three months later, in May, North Korea signed a joint communique with a visiting Pakistani delegation condemning aggression in all its forms, including efforts to achieve "hegemony," the code word long used by Peking to condemn Soviet expansion. 142/ The same month, Pyongyang defaulted on debts of \$130 million to Western countries.

In July the Chinese leadership--still under the sway of radical elements, possibly strengthened by the prospect of Mao's death--sent the North Koreans a message. In it the Chinese warmly stressed the "great unity of our two people cemented with bloodshed in their protracted fight against common enemies." They went on:

The Chinese people firmly support the Korean people in their just struggle for the independent and peaceful reunification of their fatherland and resolutely condemn all schemes aimed at creating "two Koreas." We are sure that the heroic Korean people will remove interference by any outside forces and accomplish the great cause of opposing U.S. imperialist aggression and realizing the independent and peaceful reunification of their fatherland. 143/

China also charged, in a People's Daily editorial the same day, July 10, that the United States had:

Shipped into South Korea big quantities of modern weapons, and repeatedly staged military exercises to aggravate tension on the Korean peninsula. The U.S. must dissolve the "U.N. Command" and withdraw all of its troops from South Korea in accordance with the resolution of the 30th session of the U.N. General Assembly.

This was certainly grist for North Korea's mill, supporting its case that the United States was engaged in preparing for war in South Korea. The statements, as well as the warming ties with China--must have encouraged some in the North to think that there was still hope for decisive action to oust the United States from South Korea and reunify the peninsula.

Within a month, North Korea issued a strongly worded government statement attacking the United States and South Korea, accompanied by a memorandum purporting to document that the United States was about to make war on North Korea. It said the United States had completed war preparations and was entering into a "phase of directly triggering war" from a "phase of directly preparing for war." It also demanded that the United States withdraw all its military equipment from South Korea, give up its "two Koreas" policy, disband the UN Command, withdraw all foreign troops under the UN flag (that is, U.S. forces in South Korea), and replace the armistice agreement with a peace agreement. Then, the statement said, Korea could be reunified through a national congress. 144/

Thus, the July message from Peking--like Soviet military aid in the case of the Pueblo incident--may have emboldened Pyongyang to make a new, aggressive move against the United States. Or perhaps more accurately, North Korea was ready to use almost any sign of support from

Russia or China as a pretext for taking new action.

Besides expressing North Korean frustration at its unsuccessful efforts to make a breakthrough--either by military action against South Korea and the United States or by direct negotiations with them--the poplar tree incident may have been staged to advance North Korean interests in two forums: at the nonaligned conference in Sri Lanka, which began on August 16, and at the United Nations. Kim had planned to attend the Colombo conference, but at the last minute he evidently changed his mind. According to Belgrade radio on August 15, he wired Yugoslav President Tito that he would not attend because of a "deteriorating situation on the Korean border," 145/ but North Korean Premier Pak Song Chul and Foreign Minister Ho Dam did go. On August 17 Pak Song Chul made a fiery speech against the United States repeating many of the demands that had been made in the government's August statement, but also adding that any attack on a nonaligned member should be considered an attack on all, requiring severance of political and economic relations with the aggressor. He proposed a resolution to condemn "imperialist maneuvers to provoke a war in Korea." 146/ The next day Ho Dam charged at a press conference that the United States was preparing to "throw its aggressive forces into an all-out attack against North Korea." 147/ That was the day the poplar tree incident occurred. It may have been timed to gain nonaligned support for the North Korean resolution.

At the UN General Assembly, pro-North Korean allies had entered, just before the poplar tree incident, a strong resolution calling for withdrawal from Korea of all foreign forces under the UN flag, withdrawal of "new types of military equipment" from South Korea, and an end to acts aggravating tension and increasing the danger of war. It too called for unconditional dissolution of the UN Command and replacement of the armistice agreement with a peace agreement. Pyongyang may have hoped that passage of the resolution would be facilitated by an incident in the DMZ.

That the poplar tree incident was premeditated seems clear because there was a noticeable pause between the time the North Korean guards appeared and the attack itself. That it was in line with the policies of at least some North Korean leaders also seems likely because of the sharp increase in incidents initiated by North Koreans along the DMZ in early 1976 and the provocative North Korean statements on the eve of the incident.

#### Soviet Reaction

The Russians did not immediately report the killings. Although they were in touch almost immediately with U.S. officials in Moscow and Washington, they first reported the incident on August 20 in a broadcast that spoke of "heightened tensions" and "provocative actions" by the U.S. forces in Korea. 148/ Pravda reports on August 21 and 22 noted that the clash had taken place and that there was a U.S. military

buildup in South Korea; no mention was made of the KPA forces being placed on alert. On August 23 a broadcast from Moscow in English reported that Kim Il-Sung had sent a message to the United States; Moscow inaccurately, but significantly, claimed that the message expressed "regret" that the "provocation" initiated by the United States had led to the deaths of two American officers. 149/ Finally, on August 29, an Izvestiya editorial lightly rapped the United States for using "threats and sabre-rattling" methods that were inconsistent with detente. 150/ This mild rhetorical support seems to have been the extent of Soviet aid to North Korea in the incident.

There are no indications of any Soviet military buildup either while the United States was carrying out its show of force during the tree-cutting or afterward. Possibly the Russians were not worried about the U.S. military action. Perhaps they had learned from the previous two incidents that the United States was unlikely to take retaliatory military action against either North Korean or Soviet targets. Undoubtedly Secretary of State Kissinger assured the Russians, during his talks with the Soviet ambassador on August 18, that any U.S. military action would have a limited purpose and be of short duration. The mention of the U.S. buildup reflects some Soviet uneasiness about the reappearance of U.S. military forces in the area.

Perhaps the Russians were also being extremely careful not to give any provocation to President Ford. After the Mayaguez operation, they may have feared that Ford would look for another opportunity to

reaffirm U.S. military strength, this time on the Korean peninsula. They would have understood that the presidential campaign was an appropriate time for such a show of strength 151/ and avoided giving him an opening for such action.

It is more likely, however, that Soviet relations with North Korea were by this time so attenuated that Moscow simply did not feel it worthwhile to give more than the blandest sort of support to the North Korean position. At the time of the murders North Korea was actively in the process of warming up relations with China. With little to gain, the Soviet Union decided to do next to nothing.

In any case, it could have done little, since its influence over North Korea at the time was limited. It could have put pressure on Kim to produce his grudging apology, and Soviet specialist Zbigniew Brzezinski argued that the Russians preferred Ford because he was a known quantity, and they did not want to see him embarrassed; so they urged Kim Il-Sung to comply. 152/ This is quite possible.

However, no one felt they had much influence in Pyongyang in August 1976. Attention was directed to what the Chinese could do for the United States in the situation. They probably played the largest part in bringing about the Kim message, as press reports indicated. 153/

China was even quieter than the USSR about the poplar tree incident, reporting the killings but toning down the North Koreans' inflammatory remarks about them and refraining from any comment of its

own for two weeks although it was present at talks in Panmunjom. 154/  
The Chinese also had an interest in seeing that President Ford--with  
whose administration they were beginning a dialogue--was not humiliated.  
They may have used their improved relationship with Kim to tell him to  
cool down. Reports to this effect were not disputed in Washington. 155/  
Perhaps Ambassador Huang Chen indicated something along these lines to  
Secretary of State Kissinger.

Both the Soviet Union and China probably encouraged North Korea  
to accept the new arrangements in the DMZ instituted in September. The  
Soviet Union may have joined China in urging North Korea to abandon its  
hostile activities along the border. At Military Armistice Commission  
meetings the North Koreans were businesslike and uncharacteristically  
subdued.

Whether or not the Soviet Union did push the North Koreans in these  
ways, Moscow certainly tilted toward the United States. Far from  
aiding Pyongyang, it helped make good the American case; this seems to  
have been understood in Washington. By the same token, North Korean  
restraint after the incident indicates that the Soviet message that  
the Russians would not support North Korean attacks on U.S. personnel  
or targets--finally got through to Pyongyang. Soviet objectives were  
well served on both counts.

### Conclusions

The poplar tree incident did nothing to advance North Korea's cause in marshaling third world and international support, getting the United States out of South Korea, reunifying the peninsula under Northern control, or shoring up Soviet and Chinese support. On the contrary, at Colombo, although the North Korean resolution passed on August 20, it did so over the strong objections of fifteen members of the conference and after one of the sharpest public disagreements in the nonaligned movement's fifteen-year history. Since then, North Korean prestige and influence in the movement has shown a steady deterioration, and South Korea's relations with the third world have shown a correspondingly steady improvement.

The same counterproductive results of North Korea's militance have been evident at the United Nations. The pro-North Korean resolution that had been entered in 1976 was withdrawn by its sponsors before revulsion over the killings could bring about its defeat. And the North Koreans have not bothered to introduce a resolution at the United Nations since. They proved to be their own worst enemies. The third world countries blamed North Korea, not the Americans for the poplar tree incident.

In testing the U.S. resolve in such a barbarous manner at such a juncture in American politics, Pyongyang brought about a show of American force that compelled it to put its own military forces on a wartime footing. The incident also helped strengthen the support of many



Americans, including congressmen, for the defense commitment to South Korea. Since his election, President Carter has met substantial congressional resistance to his planned withdrawal of combat troops from South Korea--much of it because of a general perception in the United States that Kim Il-Sun<sub>g</sub> is reckless, unpredictable, and blood-thirsty.

The incident also helped to bolster foreign support, especially in Europe, for the U.S. position in South Korea. The Swedish moderate newspaper Swenski Dagbladet said after the incident, for example: "If the most recent crisis .... shows anything it is that the U.S. presence is still indispensable as a guarantee against an armed North Korean attack against the border to the South." 156/ Kim's grudging apology was also a political loss. It neither erased the stain of the killings in the eyes of foreign countries nor increased his prestige with his own people.

In addition, whatever hopes Pyongyang may have retained for dealing with the Seoul regime were dashed. South Korean President Park responded to the incident by pledging to retaliate in case of another North Korean provocation, "minor or major." He said angrily, "there is a limit to our patience. A stick is needed for a mad dog." 157/ Although there was some irritation with the United States in South Korea over its vacillating response to Kim's message, this was generally offset by the show of U.S. force at a time when South Korean policies were under critical scrutiny in the United States.

Finally, in provoking the United States again and in such a way, North Korea may have used up much of the support it could expect from the Soviet Union and China. The North Korean leadership had maneuvered, with considerable success, between the Soviet Union and China since their dispute began. It is strategically placed in Asia, and neither Communist superpower wants to see it replaced by a non-Communist regime. But both Soviet and Chinese support for the North Korean positions has been decreasing. This is particularly evident in the case of the Soviet Union. From a cautious military show of force and strong political support for North Korea in January 1968, it moved to a markedly lesser degree of support, both military and politically in April 1969, when it also actively helped the United States. In August 1976 there was no Soviet military reaction at all, and Moscow gave only the mildest kind of verbal support to the North Korean case.

How far the deterioration of Soviet-North Korean relations had gone by 1978, two years after the poplar tree incident, was apparent from the initiatives Moscow took toward South Korea. In September the Russians issued visas not only to the South Korean minister of health to attend the World Health Organization meeting in Alma Ata, capital of Kazakhstan, but also to two South Korean newspapermen who accompanied him. Moreover, they allowed one of the correspondents to make a telephone call to Seoul with the news of his "warm welcome" in the Soviet Union; and local Soviet newspapers in Kazakhstan for the first time described

South Korea by its formal name of the Republic of Korea. Moscow has thus traveled much further toward a two-Koreas policy than ever before.

At the end of 1978, it was not clear whether these Soviet actions were intended mainly to apply increased pressure on North Korea in the continuing competition between Moscow and Peking or whether Moscow was seriously contemplating recognition of South Korea. What was clear, however, was that Soviet-North Korean relations had reached a new low and that the crises examined here helped bring that about.

Footnotes

1. Robert R. Simmons, "Case Studies: The Pueblo, EC-121, and Mayaguez Incidents," in Barry M. Blechman and Stephen S. Kaplan, The Use of the Armed Forces as a Political Instrument (Brookings, unpublished report), p. 7.
2. Japan Times, January 25, 1968.
3. New York Times, January 27, 1968.
4. Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), Trends, January 31, 1968.
5. FBIS, Trends, February 14, 1968.
6. Ibid.
7. For an account of the terms desired by both sides, see Simmons, "Case Studies," p. 7.
8. A Czech defector, General Jan Sejna, formerly with his country's defense ministry, did contend in the July 1969 issue of Reader's Digest that the Soviet Union collaborated in the Pueblo attack. He based his conclusion on remarks made in 1967 by Soviet Defense Minister Grechko at a drinking party to the effect that the United States showed great arrogance in deploying its reconnaissance ships along Communist coasts and the Soviet Union would have to teach it a lesson; and an account given to Czech officials by a Soviet general after the event saying that "we have humiliated the United States." (Washington Post, January 22, 1969.) This evidence is too thin and self-serving to warrant serious attention, particularly without supporting evidence.

9. Byung Chul Koh, "The Pueblo Incident in Perspective," Asian Survey (April 1969), vol. 9, p. 267.
10. Byung Chul Koh, The Foreign Policy of North Korea (Praeger, 1969), p. 85.
11. Chin O. Chung, Pyongyang Between Peking and Moscow: North Korea's Involvement in the Sino-Soviet Dispute, 1958-1975 (University of Alabama Press, 1978), pp. 112 ff.
12. Koh, Foreign Policy of North Korea, p. 99.
13. New York Times, August 22 and 23, 1968.
14. New York Times, February 1, 1968.
15. For this analysis, see Sheldon W. Simon, "The Pueblo Incident and the South Korean Revolution in North Korea's Foreign Policy: A Propaganda Analysis."
16. Roy U. T. Kim, "Sino-North Korean Relations," Asian Survey (August 1968), vol. 8, p. 722.
17. See Koh, "Pueblo Incident," p. 267.
18. Chung, Pyongyang Between Peking and Moscow, p. 120.
19. Robert R. Simmons, "China's Cautious Relations with North Korea and Indochina," Asian Survey (July 1971), Vol. 11, p. 632.

20. Joseph C. Kun, "North Korea: Between Moscow and Peking," China Quarterly (July-September, 1967), No. 31, pp. 55-56.
21. In 1966 there had been 50 such incidents; in 1967 the UN Command reported 543; in 1968 there were more than 750, making that year the bloodiest since the end of the Korean War.
22. Simmons, "Case Studies," p. 3.
23. Washington Post, February 18, 1968.
24. Koh, "Pueblo Incident," p. 272.
25. North Korean Press Agency, February 6, 1968.
26. Joungwon A. Kim, "The Long March," New York Times Magazine, February 25, 1968.
27. New York Times, January 29, 1968.
28. Simon, "Pueblo Incident," pp. 5-6.
29. For a discussion of North Korean fear of Japan and Chinese efforts to play on that fear, see Robert R. Simmons, "China's Cautious Relations with North Korea and Indo-china," Asian Survey (July 1971), Vol. 11, pp. 633-34.
30. Joungwon A. Kim, "North Korea's New Offensive," Foreign Affairs, vol. 48, no. 1 (October 1969), pp. 176-77.
31. Ibid., p. 166

32. Trevor Armbrister, A Matter of Accountability (Coward-McCann, 1970), p. 145.
33. Ibid., p. 261, and Simmons, "Case Studies," p. 6.
34. The Enterprise was en route to the Gulf of Tonkin when it was ordered to the Wonsan area; of the 59 fighter aircraft aboard the carrier, only 35 were operational.
35. According to Armbrister, Walt Rostow, President Johnson's assistant for national security affairs, was very keen on this idea because he felt it had the virtue of "symmetry," but Secretary of State Rusk rejected it out of hand, observing that its only symmetry lay in its equal outrageousness. A Matter of Accountability, p. 261.
36. Ibid., p. 266.
37. New York Times, January 26, 1968.
38. New York Times, January 27, 1968.
39. New York Times, January 28, 1968.
40. New York Times, February 11, 1968.
41. The North Koreans put up photographs at Panmunjom showing two U.S. helicopter pilots shot down in 1963 who had been released after they signed a letter of apology and the United States acknowledged that they had been spying. See also Wayne S. Kiyosaki, North Korea's Foreign Relations: The Politics of Accommodation, 1945-1975 (Praeger, 1976), p. 82.

42. FBIS, Daily Report, January 26, 1968.
43. New York Times, January 28, 1968.
44. FBIS, Daily Report, January 26, 1968.
45. New York Times, January 28, 1968.
46. Washington Post, January 27, 1968. While Kosygin's remark may have been a trial balloon, there is no evidence that the line being taken privately by Soviet representatives in Moscow and elsewhere was different. Other Russians were saying that the affair should not be blown up: at the United Nations Soviet Ambassador Platon D. Morozov referred to the incident as a North Korean "domestic matter." FBIS, Trends, January 31, 1968.
47. Washington Post, January 27, 1968.
48. New York Times, January 29, 1968.
49. New York Times, January 28, 1968.
50. Times (London), January 31, 1968. Presidential spokesman George Christian said the White House had received reports but declined to give the source. He did say, however, that no word had come from the International Red Cross.
51. New York Times, January 31, 1968.



52. New York Times, February 5, 1968.
53. FBIS, Trends, February 14, 1968.
54. Armbrister, A Matter of Accountability, p. 266.
55. Ibid.
56. Ibid.
57. Jane P. Shapiro, "Soviet Policy Towards North Korea and Korean Unification," Pacific Affairs, (Fall 1975), vol. 48, no. 3, p. 349.
58. New York Times, April 17, 1968.
59. New York Times, August 15, 1968.
60. New York Times, IV, April 20, 1969.
61. Simmons, "China's Cautious Relations with North Korea and Indochina," pp. 633-34.
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid.
64. See Lloyd M. Bucher with Mark Rascovitch, Bucher: My Story (Doubleday, 1970); Armbrister, A Matter of Accountability; and Ed Brandt, The Last Voyage of USS Pueblo (Norton, 1969).
65. Armbrister, A Matter of Accountability, p. 258.
66. Washington Post, January 22, 1969.

67. Christian Science Monitor, February 2, 1968.
68. Simon, "Pueblo Incident," p. 10.
69. Tass, September 4, 1968; cited by Simon, "Pueblo Incident," p. 10.
70. Simon, "Pueblo Incident," p. 11.
71. New York Times, April 20, 1969.
72. Simmons, "Case Studies," p. 18.
73. New York Times, April 20, 1969.
74. New York Times, April 18, 1969.
75. New York Times, April 19, 1969.
76. New York Times, April 27, 1969.
77. New York Times, April 26, 1969. No indication was given of how the message was sent.
78. Seoul Domestic Service, February 5, 1968; cited in Simon, "Pueblo Incident," p. 13.
79. Dong A-Ilbo, February 11, 1968; cited in Simmons, "Case Studies," p. 13.
80. Koh, "The Pueblo Incident in Perspective," p. 290.
81. Simmons, "Case Studies," p. 13.
82. Soon Sung Cho, "North and South Korea: Stepped Up Aggression and the Search for a New Security," Asian Survey (January 1969), vol. 9, pp. 30-31.

83. New York Times, December 23, 1968,
84. Koh, Foreign Policy of North Korea, p. 154.
85. Washington Post, April 14, 1969.
86. Koh, "The Pueblo Incident in Perspective," p. 280.
87. Simmons, "Case Studies," p. 17.
88. BBC Overseas Service, April 17, 1969.
89. New York Times, February 23, 1968.
90. See Times, (London) January 31, 1968.
91. The Russians were trying to arrange a visit by Politburo members M. A. Suslov and B. N. Ponomarev to Japan. Their efforts had to be pushed into the background when the Pueblo crisis developed. See Japan Times, January 27, 1968.
92. Renmin Ribao, August 23, 1968; cited by Economist (London), August 31, 1968.
93. Japan Times, April 16, 1969.
94. New York Times, April 24, 1969.
95. Christian Science Monitor, April 19, 1969.
96. Ibid., and New York Times, April 19, 1969.
97. New York Times, April 16, 1969.
98. Just before the attack, the plane was alerted to possible danger and ordered to abort its mission and move further south. It is not clear why it failed to do so.

99. New York Times, April 17, 1969.

100. Simmons, "Case Studies," p. 19.

101. New York Times, April 17, 1969.

102. The administration considered (1) a limited air strike on the North Korean bases that had sent up the planes responsible for shooting down the EC-121; (2) a blockade of the North Korean coast; (3) an air strike on all North Korean air bases; and (4) an attempt to lure a North Korean ship or plane outside of its territorial waters in order to destroy it (New York Times, April 17, 1969, cited by Simmons, "Case Studies," p. 19). The Nixon administration was constrained from the use of these options by many of the same factors that held the Johnson administration back in the Pueblo crisis. For one thing, there were not enough U.S. planes on "strip alert" to carry out a retaliatory action quickly (Simmons, "Case Studies," p. 16). And although North Korean targets were actually selected for a retaliatory U.S. move and a speech was prepared for President Nixon to give on the occasion of a U.S. attack, it was determined that U.S. military forces were not ready.

U.S. leaders did not think the Soviet Union had endorsed North Korea's attack, but they did fear that use of military force on any large scale might risk a Soviet, Chinese, or North Korean counterattack, touching off a major armed conflict in the area. North Koreans had no American hostages this time, but there were unconfirmed reports that two North Korean destroyers were speeding to the scene of the EC-121's crash, raising fear that they might pick up survivors and hold them.

103. New York Times, April 18, 1969.
104. Sunday Times, (London) October 6, 1968.
105. Sheldon W. Simon, "Some Aspects of China's Asian Policy in the Cultural Revolution and Its Aftermath," Pacific Affairs (Spring 1971), p. 22.
106. For example, the Swiss paper Neue Zurcher Zeitung, April 14, 1969.
107. The Soviet eagerness to help may have been spurred by the hope that they would get intelligence information from the debris. The EC-121 had, after all, carried six tons of electronic equipment. However, there is no indication that the Russians found anything worthwhile or kept what they did find.
108. FBIS, Daily Report, April 16 and 23, 1969.
109. New York Times, April 23, 1969.
110. FBIS, Survey, May 22, 1969.
111. Ibid., (emphasis added).
112. Ibid.
113. New York Times, May 15, 1969.
114. Simmons, "Case Studies," p. 25.
115. FBIS, Survey, May 22, 1969.
116. Simmons, "China's Cautious Relations with North Korea and Indochina," p. 634.

117. BBC Monitoring Service, Summary of World Broadcasts, (FE/3055/A2/1, April 23, 1969); cited by Simmons, "Case Studies," p. 22.
118. Cited by New York Times, April 24, 1969.
119. This kind of activity had been carried on for years in the JSA without serious incident.
120. Richard G. Head, Frisco W. Short, and Robert C. McFarlane, Crisis Rescution: Presidential Decision-making in the MAYAGUEZ and Korean Confrontations (Westview Press, 1978), p. 243.
121. New York Times, August 23, 1976.
122. The new arrangements were based on a formula proposed by the United States in 1970.
123. In contrast to its reluctant support for the United States in the Pueblo case, Japan gave the United States relatively strong support over the EC-121; New York Times, April 17 and 18, 1969. The Russians, then interested in dampening any Japanese militarism, could not have been happy with this outcome.
124. After the EC-121 was shot down, the United States agreed to send the F-4 fighters it had promised after the Pueblo incident; these were scheduled for delivery in August 1969. In addition, 20 F-4 jets were added to the 128 U.S. planes already in South Korea. Two more F-4 squadrons were also sent to replace the Air National Guard F-100 squadrons mobilized after the Pueblo attack. Simmons, "Case Studies," p. 22.
125. See B. C. Koh, "North Korea: A Breakthrough in the Quest for Unity," Asian Survey (January 1973), vol. 13, p. 88.

126. FBIJSTrends, June 11, 1975. Whether the Russians snubbed Kim or Kim snubbed Moscow is not clear. It was probably the former, however. A high-ranking Soviet official said in the summer of 1975 that Moscow had asked Kim to defer his planned visit to Russia until later in the year because Soviet officials were then "too busy" to see him. Another Soviet official described Kim as a "hot potato" which Moscow thought China should handle first.

127. *Ibid.*, August 20, 1975, p. 21.

128. *Ibid.*, October 16, 1976, p. 16; also *ibid.*, September 10, 1975, p. 20.

129. *Ibid.*, November 12, 1975, p. 11.

130. The Soviet Union did not, for example, help North Korea to meet its international debts, nor did it reschedule the \$700 million debt that was outstanding to itself.

131. By 1971 North Korea had 900 airplanes, of which 500 were MIG fighter-bombers. It also had thirty missile bases, twenty more than in early 1968. New York Times, April 16, 1969. But whereas in 1972, 80 percent of North Korean military assistance came from the Soviet Union and the rest from China, from early 1975, half came from Russia and half from China. For a fuller discussion of the deterioration in Soviet-North Korean relations, see Donald S. Zagoria, "Korea's Future: Moscow's Perspective," Asian Survey, November 1977.

132. Simmons, "China's Cautious Relations with North Korean and Indochina," p. 634.

133. B. C. Koh, "The Korean Worker's Party and Detente," Journal of International Affairs, vol. 28, no. 2 (1974), p. 177.
134. Ibid., p. 179.
135. Koh, "North Korea," p. 90.
136. Koh, "The Korean Worker's Party and Detente," p. 182.
137. The North Koreans proposed confederation of North and South, with the political systems remaining intact; or, as a second alternative, carrying on "economic and cultural intercourse and mutual visits of personages" while laying aside political issues.
138. Koh, "North Korea," p. 90.
139. Ibid., p. 86.
140. Chong Sik Lee, "New Paths for North Korea," Problems of Communism vol. 26 (March-April 1977), pp. 56-57.
141. Leonid Brezhnev on the World Situation, USSR Mission to the UN, Press Release, February 25, 1976.
142. FBIS, Trends (June 3, 1976), p. 23.
143. New China News Agency (NCNA) broadcast in English, July 10, 1976. The message of congratulation and support was sent in the name of Chairman Mao Tse-tung and Premier Hua Kuo-feng on the fifteenth anniversary of the Chinese-Korean Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance.
144. Head, Short, and McFarlane, Crisis Resolution, p. 208.



145. Ibid., p. 212.
146. Washington Post, August 18, 1976.
147. Far Eastern Economic Review, September 3, 1976.
148. Head, Short, and McFarlane, Crisis Resolution, p. 288.
149. FBIS, Trends, August 25, 1976.
150. Head, Short, and McFarlane, Crisis Resolution, p. 288.
151. Indications are that Ford's response to the poplar tree incident may, in fact, have helped him in the campaign. Ibid., p. 279.
152. Far Eastern Economic Review, September 3, 1976.
153. See, for example, Korea Herald, August 28, 1976.
154. Washington Post, August 31, 1976.
155. Far Eastern Economic Review, September 3, 1976.
156. Quoted in Head, Short, and McFarlane, Crisis Resolution, p. 279.
157. Japan Times, August 21, 1976.

## Chapter 10

### THE ARAB-ISRAELI WARS OF 1967 AND 1973

by Paul Jabber and Roman Kolkowicz

Because of the high priority Moscow gave the normalization and stabilization of relations with the industrialized West during the late 1960s and early 1970s, it was careful not to give the United States any provocation in the Middle East. Moscow preferred protracted, low-level, controlled instability in the Middle East to radical and violent rearrangement of the regional political and military balance. The latter, however, was at the heart of the policy objectives of Arab clients in the area. Thus a frustrating, dissonant, and counterproductive relationship ensued between patron and clients. Moreover, neither the primary Soviet security objectives in the Middle East (long-term naval and air bases or facilities) nor those of the clients (superior offensive weapon systems) were granted by either side. In short, while Moscow was impelled by ideological, political, and security motivations to penetrate the Middle East, its behavior there was constrained by superpower balancing and deterring relations with the United States.

In the aftermath of Khrushchev's ouster from power in 1964, a fundamental realignment occurred in Soviet priorities and tactics. Instead of following a single Stalinist, either-or policy of confrontation with the West or Khrushchev's provocative and discredited policy based on camouflaged weakness and without internal consistency or clear purpose, the Brezhnev-Kosygin regime set a new course. This policy is

trifurcated: to hold and stabilize relations with the industrialized West; to contain China; and to explore and expand in the areas south of Russia. Soviet policy toward the West has been stabilizing across the board (detente, deterrence, arms control, cultural and scientific exchanges, technological transfers, trade, etc.); policy toward China is one of containing ideological hostility, military pressure, and political challenges (contain, isolate, deter, compel); policies in the Middle East and the third world are exploratory, expansionary, and include massive arms transfers, technical assistance, anti-imperialistic agitation, and support of radical and revolutionary movements.

In the Middle East, while eagerly seeking to expand its presence and influence among the "progressive" Arab countries, the Soviet Union has continued to assign stabilizing relations with the industrialized West a higher priority than destabilizing and quasi-revolutionary activities in the Middle East. On the whole, it may be proper to characterize Soviet interests and constraints in the Middle East during the 1967-73 period as reflecting a long-range investment of resources, a policy of nonprovocative and gradualist penetration into societies that are receptive because of ideological congruence, dependence on Soviet arms and credits, or sheer desperation resulting from looming defeat in war. Soviet policy was challenged to maneuver between the Scylla of superpower-confrontation fear and the Charybdis of ideological, political, economic, and strategic lures set by the porousness and

instability of the Middle East.

The Middle East and the Mediterranean basin assumed significant security interests for the Soviet Union from the mid-sixties on as a result of several developments: the movement of Soviet strategic doctrine and policy away from the rigid finite-deterrence, quasi-massive-retaliation position supported by the Khrushchev regime toward concepts of limited, conventional wars as a probable, even desirable, Soviet policy variant; 1/ a huge military and merchant naval building program that changed Russia from a minor naval actor into a global naval power and aroused its interest in certain naval facilities and presence in the Mediterranean region; 2/ and a shift in Soviet strategic policies so that the navy's role changed from one that was largely defensive and supportive to a forward-deployed, deterrence-related anticarrier and anti-Polaris mission. 3/

All of these developments motivated the Soviet military and political leadership to provide for reliable naval support facilities outside the Black Sea bottleneck and closer to the Sixth Fleet sea-lanes. 4/ Moreover, with renewed interest both in influence-building in "progressive" and other states of the Mediterranean region and in maintaining freedom of maritime passage, high mobility, and effective forces for on-shore intervention, the Soviet Union began showing its flag, visiting ports, and generally maintaining a high profile. 5/ Finally, the heightened strategic value of certain countries along the eastern

seacoast of Africa and the Red Sea clearly led the Soviet Union to rely on its navy in those areas too. 6/

After Albania terminated the USSR's use of a naval base at Vlone in 1961, the Russians were eager to obtain naval facilities and air bases elsewhere in the littoral region as a replacement. The need for this became even more urgent after the United States announced in 1963 that Polaris submarines would regularly patrol the Mediterranean. 7/ The Soviet Union concentrated its efforts on Egypt and embarked on some intensive and expensive wooing of Nasser and subsequently of Sadat. Top Politburo members as well as ranking military leaders visited Cairo regularly. 8/ The minister of defense and the commander-in-chief of the Soviet navy, Admiral of the Fleet S.I. Gorshkov, made at least four visits to Egypt between 1961 and 1966 trying to persuade the Egyptians to provide his country with naval support facilities. 9/ But it was not until the fiasco of the Six-Day War that the Egyptians, urgently needing Soviet arms aid, provided extensive naval and air support facilities. The USSR thus obtained virtual control over seven air bases in Egypt (Jianklis, El Mansura, Inchas, Cairo West, Beni Suef, Aswan, and Mersa Matruh), as well as preferential treatment at four harbors in the Mediterranean (Port Said, Alexandria, Mersa Matruh, and Sollum), and one (Berenice) in the Red Sea. These privileges were terminated after March 1976, when Egypt abrogated its Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union. Since then Moscow has been searching,

with mixed results, for alternative naval and air facilities in the region, particularly in Syria, Algeria, Libya, Somalia, Yemen, and Ethiopia. It seems to have concluded, however, that it cannot rely on the volatile regimes and leaders in the region for long-range air and naval facilities, and has restructured the size, time on station, scope, and mission of its Mediterranean squadron and the air support units in the region. 10/

Soviet political interests in the Middle East from 1967 to 1973 appear to have been closely related to the emerging Brezhnev-Kosygin policy realignment. Specifically, the policy of the Soviet Union was to support progressive regimes and movements in the region, link them under Soviet aegis in anti-imperialist, anti-Western entities, make them dependent on the USSR, and finally shape and influence their domestic and foreign policies to conform with its own.

Soviet political and strategic objectives were as follows:

1. to maintain a suitable level of tension in the area, forcing the Arab regimes to remain dependent on Soviet military assistance;
2. to obtain concessions from Arab clients that served Soviet strategic and national security interests (air and naval support facilities);
3. to obtain and increase Soviet influence in internal affairs of the client state so as to enhance socialist and Communist values, structures, and political-economic reforms. Above all, the Soviet Union

sought to avoid situations in which it would lose control over events while being forced to maintain or even increase its presence and commitment. Fait accomplis by its clients, blackmail, and catalytic developments were to be avoided at any cost; excessive Arab offensive strategic strength was thus to be avoided as well as excessive Arab vulnerability to Israeli offensive superiority. Either one of these contingencies could provoke violent confrontation ("wars of annihilation") between the local protagonists with superpower involvement inevitable. Since the Soviet Union clearly preferred a protracted stalemate in the area, a state of "no war, no peace," it used its influence to shape the regional military balance and its clients' national capabilities and strategies to conform with these primary objectives.

Soviet military aid was designed to accomplish the following:

1. to develop strong defense postures in Egypt and Syria to make Israeli aggression costly (in lives and material), while allowing the USSR to be a highly visible supporter and protector of Arab national security; but without providing its clients with the superior offensive strategic capabilities that might provoke a superpower confrontation by raising the danger of "wars of annihilation" against Israel;
2. to develop credible deterrence capabilities, further reducing Israeli incentives for attacks against Arab states. The Egyptians and Syrians were provided with weapons that enabled them to prevent Israeli penetration of their air space but did not give them offensive superiority;

3. to use defense and deterrence policies, combined with economic and diplomatic pressure on the West, as a strategy of compellence against Israel. 11/

Soviet policy preferences in the Middle East may be summarily described as premised on a policy of deterrence that would reduce incentives for unilateral full-scale aggression and of compellence that would enable the Soviet Union and its clients to wrest concessions from Israel without going to war. This strategy therefore shaped the military and political activities of the Kremlin, whose aim was to retain Arab-Israeli qualitative arms balances but not necessarily quantitative parities.

Soviet policy toward the Middle East has changed with the departure of each party leader: Stalin's indifference to the third world was followed by Khrushchev's exuberance and activism and then by the calculating expansionism of the Brezhnev regime. Soviet policy is affected not only by change of regime but also by the apparently conflicting interests of the ruling hierarchs in the coalition that has been governing Russia since Khrushchev's ouster. The evidence suggests that this is not a harmonious coalition and that important disagreements about priorities and policies have taken place inside the Kremlin. 12/ The Politburo contains among its dozen and half members the leaders of the major Soviet bureaucracies. With its consensus mode of operation, the group has tended to avoid radical policy innovations



and their attendant risks; instead it has coalesced around minimal cost-risk-threat policies. The main axis of disagreement on the Middle East among the institutional representatives in the Politburo has run between those who prefer a vigorous, massive, and direct involvement and those who advocate prudence, moderation, and economy. The former may be characterized as interventionists, the latter as "detentists." The interventionists are less concerned about superpower detente and the possible effect on it of a more vigorous Soviet political-military policy in the Middle East than the detentists, who seem to worry about superpower confrontation and the damage to Soviet-American relations that might be provoked by Soviet behavior in the Middle East.

The scanty evidence available on these internal Soviet bureaucratic politics suggests that the interventionists make up much of the military establishment, the hard-line orthodox party sectors, the defense-related industries, and their managers, and that the detentists include the large nonmilitary industrial-managerial bureaucracies of the government, the bulk of the party membership and of the Central Committee apparatus, and the foreign policy establishment, including the most important "think tanks" and research institutes.

The detentist position on the Middle East has centered on the primacy of political solutions rather than military ones, on avoiding provocation of the other superpower, on maintaining a reasonable balance of political and military relations in the region. This was expressed

candidly by a ranking apparatchik of the Central Committee in a speech given in Cairo:

We are working for a political settlement, and a political settlement does not mean just words from one side only, but both means and prescribes the existence of a certain balance of power.... A political settlement is not surrender, although some people see in it the devil itself, and claim that a popular war is the only hope. But where? In Sinai?

We have to face reality: Sinai is not Vietnam. A popular war in relation to Sinai is absurd. Furthermore, launching a popular war from the West Bank may not be absurd, but it is difficult because of the terrain there.... Therefore you need to have an optimistic outlook and patience. 13/

The interventionist viewpoint is less sanguine. The military lecture that "words and wishes are not enough. Practical steps are necessary, along with active participation in the struggle of other nations for freedom and independence." 14/ Moreover, "it will be a grave mistake to place all hopes and attention on political settlement and to forget military needs." Although "the UAR made great efforts to achieve political settlement . . . , Tel Aviv's stubborn position renders the increase of the UAR's military might absolutely necessary."

Actual Soviet policy in the Middle East in the past two decades indicates a compromise between these two extreme positions. It followed a middle-of-the-road, low-committal, nonconfrontational approach drawing heavily on Soviet economic resources; yet in failing to provide Moscow with effective political leverage, it satisfied no one. The hard-line party traditionalists (for example, M. Suslov, A. Shelepin, P. Shelest) found it difficult to accept Sadat, Assad, or Qaddafi, who hardly fit the Leninist revolutionary leader mold. The pragmatists in the governmental-managerial bureaucracies were critical of the expenditures of scarce resources in the bottomless quagmire of Egypt and Syria and

of the corrupt and inefficient Arab bureaucracies managing these resources. The Soviet military, while coveting Arab naval and air bases, were openly contemptuous of the Arab allies and found them poorly trained and disciplined and utterly unreliable. And Soviet diplomats and governmental leaders found their Arab counterparts unpredictable and disloyal.

The pull of the Middle East on Soviet interests and imagination has been powerful enough to overcome internal dissonance and shape Soviet policies in a long-range, expansionist direction, thus defining the operational modus vivendi among the interventionists and detentists. The Soviet Union has declared the region to be of vital interest and has made it so through repeated and escalating commitments to and support of the several regimes among the "progressive" countries.

#### The Six Day War

After the 1956 Suez crisis and ensuing Sinai war, the simmering Arab-Israeli conflict was relatively dormant for a decade. A United Nations Emergency Force, charged with policing the Sinai borders and ensuring freedom of Israeli navigation through the Strait of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba, separated the forces of Israel and Egypt, the two main contenders. But this was a fragile truce. In 1964 a flare-up of the long-standing dispute over access to the Jordan River caused by Israel's completion of its national water carrier project--designed to

channel some of the Jordan's flow into the arid Negev Desert in the south--ruptured the relative calm of the preceding years. Shortly thereafter, a number of new underground Palestinian groups began small terrorist operations across Israel's eastern borders. Heavy Israeli retaliation and increasing Syrian support for the Palestinian fedayeen produced repeated frontier skirmishes. Rising tension reached a climax on April 7, 1967, with an aerial and artillery battle between Syria and Israel over Lake Tiberias and the Golan Heights. This escalation was accompanied by weekly exchanges of verbal threats and accusations by Damascus and Tel Aviv.

In February 1966 an internal coup in the Syrian ruling Baath party brought to power in Damascus a left-wing faction with strong Marxist leanings. The new leaders immediately declared not only their total commitment to Arab rights in Palestine, but also their strong conviction that a "revolutionary people's war" was requisite in the Arab confrontation with Israel. From mid-1966 on, though fedayeen raids were mainly across the Jordanian-Israeli border, Israeli leaders increasingly pointed accusing fingers at Damascus. On February 5, 1967, Israel sent a warning to Syria through diplomatic channels that a large retaliatory raid would be forthcoming if Syrian support for the guerrillas did not cease. 16/ Statements of similar import attributed to Prime Minister Levi Eshkol and Chief-of-Staff Itzhak Rabin appeared in the press in the first half of May. 17/ The Jerusalem Post reported that planning was under way for "a military expedition intended to take the wind out of the Syrian sails once and for all." 18/ On May 12 a United

Press dispatch, featured in the New York Times and other major newspapers, reported that "a highly placed Israeli source [believed at the time to be Premier Eshkol] said here today that if Syria continued the campaign of sabotage in Israel it would immediately provoke military action aimed at overthrowing the Syrian regime." 19/ For their part, Syrian leaders regularly denounced Israeli threats as a manifestation of the "imperialist-Zionist-reactionary conspiracy" against the Arab left, yet defiantly vowed continued support for the Palestinian "commandos, sons of the occupied territories, who have a natural right to return to and liberate their homes." 20/ Strong support for Damascus came from the Soviet Union which, though unhappy with the destabilizing effect of commando activities, appeared determined to protect the precarious hold of the new Marxist leadership.

Indeed, for the Soviet Union, the 1966 coup was a welcome development. Moscow was irritated by its failure to make ideological inroads into the Arab world, despite large amounts of military, economic, and technical assistance to several Arab countries since 1955 and the emergence of a number of friendly anti-Western regimes--including Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Algeria, and North Yemen. A region politically inflamed with postcolonial nationalist fervor and socioculturally suffused with Islamic values and a generally conservative religious outlook, the Arab Middle East had proved singularly impervious to Marxist dogma--at least to the Soviet version. Communist parties had been systematically curbed and often outlawed in most Arab states. Only in Iraq, during the later years of Qasim's rule, had an Arab Communist force been close to obtaining power, and it had been swiftly and bloodily crushed by its

nationalist opponents at the first opportunity.

After Khrushchev's fall in 1964, a reappraisal of the socialist potential of third world regimes, prompted partly by Soviet failures in the Middle East, produced a more tight-fisted and conservative attitude toward the Afro-Asian world. A year later, through no particular Soviet effort, a government was installed in Damascus that was willing to admit Communists into the cabinet, employed a Marxist lexicon, and looked to the Kremlin for political support. For all their caution, "the Soviet leaders must have felt a certain eagerness at this renewed opportunity, after a break of six years, for the enlargement of Soviet influence in the heart of the Arab world." 21/

Russian support began immediately. By early May 1966 Izvestiya was accusing Israel of border provocations and of conducting a campaign against Syria reflective of Western imperialism's displeasure with the "progressive changes" in Syria. As tension along the Syrian-Israeli border rose, Soviet media began to warn of Israeli troop concentrations facing Syrian lines. In his detailed analysis of the buildup of the 1967 war, Walter Laqueur points out that such news regularly made headlines in the Soviet press throughout the year preceding the crisis, and that an item about the planned overthrow of the Syrian government by Israel had been featured in Pravda at least once a month from October 1966 on. 22/ At an official level, the Soviet government repeatedly sent Israel diplomatic notes warning against intervention. The strongest was delivered on April 21, 1967, after the major clash on April 7; it spoke of "dangerous playing with fire on the part of Israel in an area

near to the borders of the Soviet Union," warned that "a policy of aggression against its neighbors is bound to result in serious consequences" for Israel, and counseled the Israeli leaders to shun a course of action that could "endanger the vital interests of their people and the fate of their State." 23/ Economic and military aid to Syria was also forthcoming. An arms supply agreement believed to be worth \$200 million and to have included MIG-21 aircraft and SA-2 missiles was reportedly signed in the summer of 1966. 24/

So by May 1967 the Soviet Union had taken on the role of major protector of the Syrian regime, in a relationship that appeared based not only on traditional Soviet support for progressive Arab nationalist governments but also on a novel ideological kinship. Soviet solicitude was further manifested by Moscow's vigorous promotion of a progressive front among Egypt, Syria, North Yemen, and Algeria. Kosygin had urged a closing of the ranks during his visit to Cairo in May 1966, and a mutual defense pact between Syria and Egypt had been concluded in November.

#### The Slide to War

The 1967 crisis began on May 15, after major Egyptian troop movements were reported in Sinai and a state of emergency was declared by Cairo. The Egyptians said this was necessary to deter an expected Israeli attack against Syria. Later President Nasser would explain his actions as having been prompted by warnings of impending Israeli aggression conveyed to him by Syria and the Soviet Union:

We all know how the Middle East crisis started in the first half of May. The enemy had a plan to invade Syria; this was frankly admitted in all the statements of enemy politicians

and military commanders, and there was ample evidence of premeditation to that effect.

Syrian sources were quite definite on this point, and we ourselves had reliable information confirming it--our friends in the Soviet Union even warned the parliamentary delegation that visited Moscow at the beginning of last month that there was a plot against Syria. 25/

These moves were followed by Secretary General U Thant's hurried withdrawal of the UN Emergency Force (UNEF) on May 18, Syrian and Israeli mobilization, and Egypt's closure on May 22 of the Strait of Tiran to Israeli shipping and all other vessels carrying strategic cargoes to Israel. The Egyptian blockade of the Gulf of Aqaba immediately became the center of the gathering storm. Earlier, Israel had defined this act as a casus belli. Amid rising tension, intensive Israeli-American consultations were held in which Israel sought to enlist U.S. aid in restoring the status quo ante on the basis of an American commitment to freedom of Israeli navigation through the straits made by the Eisenhower administration at the time of the 1957 Israeli withdrawal from Sinai. Deeply engaged in the Vietnam conflict and fearful for its interests in the Arab world, the United States was reluctant to act alone; however, President Johnson's efforts to arrange a multinational flotilla to challenge the Egyptian blockade came to nothing. Finally, at the end of May, King Hussein of Jordan flew to Cairo and, putting aside his long political quarrel with Nasser, signed a mutual defense treaty with Egypt that placed Jordan's army under overall Egyptian command in case of war. On June 5, after forming a broad coalition government, Israel opened hostilities with a successful



surprise air attack that decimated the air forces of Egypt, Syria, and Jordan and determined the course of the war from its outset. Six days later, when military activities came to an end, the Israelis had decisively defeated their three Arab opponents and gained control of the Sinai peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank of the Jordan, and Syria's Golan Heights.

#### Soviet Behavior

Soviet objectives in the 1967 crisis could be described in the following terms: to avoid a military confrontation with the United States, since no vital Soviet interests were at stake and there was a marked American preponderance of power in the area; to maintain a posture of determined political support for the Arabs designed to safeguard cordial Soviet-Arab relations and exert a deterrent effect on Israel and its patron, the United States; and to prevent the strongly pro-Soviet, internally shaky Marxist regime in Syria from losing power--a likely development if there was a large Israeli punitive thrust across the border.

Stage 1 (April 7-May 22). Although Soviet sources had for over a year periodically warned of Israel's aggressive intentions toward Syria, the April 7 fighting over Lake Tiberias probably brought about a major review of the Middle East situation in Moscow. The official Soviet reaction to this incident took fully two weeks to materialize. Only on April 21 was the Israeli ambassador in Moscow, Katriel Katz, given the stiffly worded note mentioned earlier. Scarcely four days later, however,

a second statement was handed to Katz; this time Israel was formally accused of massing troops on the Syrian borders with hostile intent:

The Soviet Government is in possession of information about Israeli troop concentrations on the Israeli-Arab borders at the present time. These concentrations are assuming a dangerous character, coinciding as they do with the hostile campaign in Israel against Syria.... In this context it is impossible not to draw attention to the bellicose statements by Israeli military personalities against Arab countries. 26/

The April 7 battle--the largest Arab-Israeli clash since 1956--had gone badly for the Syrians, who had lost six MIG-21s but failed to down a single Israeli aircraft. The vehemence of the Israeli response to the initial Syrian artillery shelling must have been read in Moscow as indicating Tel Aviv's serious intention to cause the downfall of the Damascus government by humiliating it militarily. Because of Syria's demonstrated weakness, it was imperative to ward off further Israeli action. This could be done in only one of two ways: through a threat of direct Soviet intervention, which would have lacked credibility if based on the meager Soviet military presence in the area or would have prompted a U.S. response had it conjured up the possibility of Soviet resort to home-based forces; or by involving Syria's only effective political ally in the Arab world--Egypt. In similar situations in the past, Nasser had ordered a show of force in Sinai (February 1960) or mobilized his military (August 1963) so as to dissuade Israel from threatened retaliation against Syria for border incidents. With a seven-month-old mutual defense treaty between Egypt and Syria in effect, another dissuasive intervention by Nasser could be expected if a sufficient

case could be made for an impending Israeli move. Thus the Soviet operational objective in this phase was to induce the UAR government to make a show of force designed to ward off a large Israeli raid against Syria. There is no evidence that the Soviet Union undertook any military action during this phase to affect the Middle East situation, nor did it threaten to do so.

Soviet diplomacy was primarily directed at two targets: Israel and Egypt. The Soviet communications of April 21 and 25 warning Israel not to engage in retaliation were accompanied by increased press coverage of the situation, emphasizing the alleged Israeli troop concentrations and blaming Israel exclusively for the increased tension. The advisability of restraint was urged on Israel's permanent UN representative, Gideon Rafael, who was visiting Moscow, in meetings with both Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Semyonov and the head of the Middle East department, Alexander Shchiborin. Semyonov cautioned that "local conflicts could easily get out of control and therefore the Soviet Union could not remain indifferent should they occur near its frontiers. Those who invited a conflict close to the Soviet borders might pay a very high price." 27/ Subsequent Soviet-Israeli contacts in Moscow and Tel Aviv throughout this phase were in the same vein.

The most crucial Soviet moves in this period were directed at Egypt, however. Information regarding a likely Israeli strike against Syria before the end of May and the actual massing of eleven Israeli brigades in the north was "officially" relayed to a parliamentary delegation headed by National Assembly speaker Anwar el-Sadat, which visited the USSR from April 27 to May 14. 28/ Between May 8 and 12 similar news was

conveyed to Nasser in Cairo by the Soviet ambassador and by Syrian intelligence sources. 29/ Apparently Nasser asked Moscow for its opinion of the validity of these estimates and received confirmation. On the other hand, contradictory evidence was provided by the Egyptian army chief-of-staff, General Mohammed Fawzi, who was dispatched to Syria on May 14. Despite Fawzi's report that no Israeli troop concentrations were in evidence, on the same day Egyptian armed forces were mobilized and the ostentatious movement of troops into Sinai began.

Whether Nasser believed Syria to be actually threatened or whether he chose to act as if he did because a confrontation with Israel suited his political needs of the moment is not clear. In any case, his actions--which were followed two days later by the withdrawal of UNEF--accomplished the Soviet purpose admirably. Overnight, attention shifted from the Syrian-Israeli border to Sinai.

Egypt's actions elicited immediate unofficial approval from Moscow. The Soviet media commented positively on the Egyptian troop movements and continued to assail Israel's "active preparations for military adventures." 30/ No negative commentaries on the termination of the UNEF mission are apparent. On May 12 Soviet Ambassador Chuvakin turned down an invitation from the Israeli Foreign Ministry to visit the northern areas and ascertain for himself that there were no special troop concentrations. 31/ On May 19, the day Israel ordered heavy mobilization of reserves, Israeli Foreign Minister Eban's request to

Chuvakhin for Soviet cooperation in organizing "a reciprocal deescalation of troops in the South" was met with the by-now standard response that the crisis was of Israel's own making and Arab actions were legitimately in self-defense. 32/ On May 22 Israeli Ambassador Katz was told by Shch'borin at the Foreign Ministry in Moscow that "we cannot be responsible for what is happening in the atmosphere which was poisoned by your leaders' statements." 33/ Throughout this phase, Soviet diplomatic behavior was strongly supportive of the Arab position and careful not to weaken the deterrent value of Nasser's moves by words or deeds that might allay Israel's anxiety. On May 22, however, the Soviet Union was suddenly faced with a radically altered situation. Egypt blockaded the Tiran Straits, and a full-blown crisis quickly ensued.

Stage 2 (May 23-June 4). From the available record it is impossible to determine whether Moscow was consulted or even informed about the decision to close the Gulf of Aqaba to Israeli navigation and Israel-bound strategic cargoes before it was announced by Nasser in his May 22 speech. In any case, subsequent Soviet behavior suggests growing wariness of the dangers of entanglement in the looming military confrontation. Moscow understood clearly that an Israeli military response to Nasser's challenge was likely: on May 19 Eban had told Chuvakhin that Israel would go to war if its freedom of navigation was interfered with. 34/ Soviet conduct was extremely cautious during this phase. All efforts seemed directed toward preventing war while seeking a diplomatic solution that

would preserve the political gains of the Arab clients and, if war broke out, toward avoiding military involvement unless the United States became directly engaged.

Nevertheless, the single most important military action undertaken by the Soviet Union in the 1967 crisis occurred during this phase. On May 22, the day the Gulf of Aqaba was closed, Moscow notified the Turkish government that under the terms of the Montreux Convention ten Soviet warships would pass through the Dardanelles from the Black Sea into the Mediterranean beginning on May 30. On this date, a tanker and a submarine supply ship went through; they were followed on June 3 by three frigates and two auxiliary vessels, on June 5 by a destroyer, and on June 5 by two additional warships, of which one was a minesweeper. 35/ This reinforcement of the Mediterranean eskadra brought its total strength up to some thirty ships, the largest deployment in the Mediterranean since a permanent naval presence was established there in 1964.

Throughout the crisis and war, however, most Soviet units remained well removed from the immediate vicinity of the conflict. The major area of concentration was the offshore anchorage some 100 miles to the northwest of Crete, that is, some 500 miles away from the shores of Sinai and behind a screen of U.S. Sixth Fleet units south of Crete. A small number of Soviet units--although warships replaced the usual intelligence ships--continued to shadow Sixth Fleet ships and others conducted routine exercises in the Ionian Sea between Sicily and Greece. 36/ Thus,

by its deployment and quality of reinforcement, the Soviet Union clearly signaled that it did not wish to challenge the U.S. Navy or be seen as trying to directly affect the course of events in the Arab-Israeli area with its fleet. "I am quite sure," Admiral Wylie said, "that they were even less anxious than the United States to have any of their forces involved." 37/

The naval balance of forces in the Mediterranean in May and June 1967 certainly did not favor aggressive Soviet behavior. Although the ships brought in from the Black Sea in the week preceding the war practically doubled the number of surface combatants in the eskadra, the Sixth Fleet remained vastly superior in firepower and in its ability to project tactical air support. Facing the eskadra's single cruiser of the old Kirov class, eight or nine destroyer-type ships, and two or three submarines were the Sixth Fleet's two aircraft carriers, the Saratoga and the America, two cruisers, ten destroyers, several submarines, and an antisubmarine force that entered the Mediterranean from the North Atlantic on June 2. The American carriers had about 200 F-4 and A-4 fighter bombers and attack aircraft; these were unmatched on the Soviet side. While no Russian amphibious forces of ships were deployed in the Mediterranean during this period, the United States had a marine battalion landing team, with some 2,000 men, permanently detached to the Sixth Fleet for action onshore. In addition, three destroyers and one command ship patrolled the Red Sea throughout the crisis, with no Soviet counterparts.

The eskadra also had to contend with a substantial British naval presence in the region. Toward late May one British carrier, the Hermes, six frigates, and a squadron of minesweepers assembled in the Gulf

of Aden for possible participation in a challenge to Egypt's blockade of the Tiran Strait; and in the Mediterranean, a task group comprising the carrier Victorious and four escort frigates hovered near Malta. One indicator of the Soviet Union's concern about the British force in the Mediterranean, and perhaps of uncertainty about its potential role in a showdown, is that one destroyer and two minesweepers of the eskadra were assigned to tail it. Although the Soviet Black Sea fleet had more modern, missile-carrying, heavy ships available, Moscow chose not to bring them into the Mediterranean. 38/

If the Soviet intent was nonaggressive, were the naval reinforcements meant to be a deterrent to Israel and the United States? With an Israeli military response to the Egyptian blockade expected from one day to the next, was Moscow signaling that it would play an active protective role in case of war? Was the Soviet purpose to impress on the West the probability of a confrontation at sea if an attempt was made by the United States and Britain to lift the blockade by force? If such deterrent effects were indeed sought, the Soviet Union went about this in an indirect, low-key way, as evidenced by several facts.

First, fully one-half of the ten-ship Soviet complement sent to the Mediterranean consisted of auxiliary vessels; the largest fighting unit was a destroyer, which did not reach the area until June 4; and no amphibious capabilities were introduced, although an increase in the number of submarines added to combat capabilities.

Second, no attempt was made to project a Soviet presence, however symbolic, into the conflict zone. While British and U.S. units--including



aircraft carriers--converged on the Red Sea from the south and the U.S. carrier Intrepid traversed the Suez Canal southward on May 31, all Soviet units remained in the Mediterranean well to the west of the Israeli coast.

Third, the beefing up of the eskadra took place at a time when routine placements of Soviet units, following the pattern of previous Soviet rotations, were expected; and Western newspapers pointed out that the reinforcements merely raised the Soviet forces to the normal level for summer exercises. An overt deterrent posture required increasing the political visibility of these forces and some clear signaling that such naval movements were extra-ordinary, yet the Soviet media generally ignored them and avoided any references to or speculation about a Soviet balancing role while daily excoriating the presence of the Sixth Fleet in the region and Western "gunboat diplomacy." 39/

Not surprisingly, the deterrent effect of the naval reinforcements--and, indeed, of the entire Soviet naval presence--on the decisions of the presumptive target countries appears to have been minimal. Washington's efforts to assemble the multinational task force did not slacken because of Soviet actions. Their eventual failure was due to Pentagon opposition fueled by concern about the military implications of Egyptian resistance and congressional reluctance to become involved in other conflicts while an intense war was being waged in Vietnam. Moreover, other Western nations were not enthusiastic about the project, and American diplomats in the Middle East warned vigorously against the consequences for U.S.-Arab relations of a U.S.-Egyptian clash in the straits. 40/

Israeli decisionmakers similarly discounted any military danger from the Russians; by June 2 Foreign Minister Eban, perhaps the most cautious among them, "was convinced that the Russians would not intervene militarily, particularly if the war was of short duration." 41/ Michael Brecher, in an exhaustive study of Israel's behavior during the 1967 crisis, asserts that Prime Minister "Eshkol and his colleagues did not attribute significance to Soviet hostility." 42/ Israel's preoccupation in the days preceding the war was with guaranteeing a helpful political stand by the United States and the West generally, both to secure dependable sources of arms resupply in case of need and "to retain the fruits of victory" confidently predicted by its military leaders. 43/ If such a supportive stand could be obtained, the West's superiority in the regional naval balance was expected to preclude any Soviet military action.

Indirect targets of the Soviet reinforcements undoubtedly were Moscow's chief Arab clients--Syria and Egypt--and the expanded naval presence was tangible proof of sympathy for the Arab stand and added credibility to daily Soviet statements of "resolute support" in the crisis. At the same time, however, it was necessary to restrain Cairo and Damascus from further provocative actions--or even a military offensive--encouraged by the bellicose mood whipped up in the Arab world by political rhetoric and Nasser's dramatic moves. These contradictory requirements probably best explain the low profile maintained by the Soviet naval contingent. The passage of ten additional ships through the Turkish straits, plus the coverage of Soviet fleet movements

in the Western and Arab press, would accomplish the first objective; the unobtrusiveness of the naval presence and Soviet silence about its role helped achieve the second and kept the Americans and the Israelis guessing. The limits of the Soviet role must have been clear to the Egyptians. During his news conference with the world press on May 28, Nasser was questioned about whether the Soviet Union would be asked to intervene if the Sixth Fleet were to aid Israel directly.

He responded:

If American military intervention of this kind takes place, naturally we shall regard it as a hostile act directed against the whole Arab nation. However, we shall not ask any of the friendly countries to intervene; we shall leave it to these countries to make their own decisions. 44/

In a May 29 speech Nasser again indicated that he was not counting on active Soviet help. After reporting that his war minister, Shams Badran--who had been sent to Moscow for consultations several days earlier, apparently at Soviet request 45/--had returned with a letter from Kosygin "in which he says that the Soviet Union supports us in this conflict, and will allow no country to interfere until the situation returns to what it was before 1956," he declared: "As I said yesterday, we have not asked the Soviet Union or any other country to intervene, because we do not want a confrontation that might lead to a world war." 46/

The official Soviet position--avoiding the outbreak of war while publicly supporting the Arabs--was expressed in a government statement issued on May 23 that blamed Israel for the onset of the crisis, defended the Egyptian actions as a legitimate honoring of joint defense commitments, and promised strong Soviet support against aggression aimed

at the Arab states. The operative clauses stopped short of a military threat, however, and stressed instead the need to maintain peace in the region:

let no one have any doubts about the fact that should anyone try to unleash aggression in the Near East, he would be met not only with the united strength of Arab countries but also with strong opposition to aggression from the Soviet Union and all peace-loving states....

The Soviet Government keeps a close watch on the developments in the Near East. It proceeds from the fact that the maintenance of peace and security in the area directly adjacent to the Soviet borders meets the vital interests of the Soviet peoples.

With due account taken of the situation, the Soviet Union is doing and will continue to do everything in its power to prevent a violation of peace and security in the Near East and safeguard the legitimate rights of the peoples. 47/

This statement appeared several hours after Nasser's announcement of the Aqaba blockade. Though approving the removal of the UNEF, it ignored the closing of the straits. Soviet disapproval of this is shown by the lack of supportive statements on this issue by either official sources or the media throughout the prewar crisis. In fact, while commentators and editorialists continued to echo the "official line" of the May 23 statement and spoke of strong Soviet support for the Arab stance, the Soviet leadership took several steps in the week following the blockade to restrain the Arabs and reassure Israel.

The two most important demarches in connection with Egypt were an urgent message from the Kremlin conveyed orally to Nasser by the Soviet ambassador in the early hours of May 27 urging Egypt not to fire the first shot, 48/ and consultations held with War Minister Badran

in Moscow. 49/ Both Badran and Syrian President Nureddin al-Attassi and Foreign Minister Ibrahim Makhous, who visited the Soviet capital on a hastily arranged visit on May 29-30, found the Kremlin unwilling to promise military support in case of war. 50/

At the same time, Kosygin sent a personal note to Prime Minister Eshkol urging a peaceful resolution of the crisis; the note was written in moderate, unaccusing language quite unlike previous and subsequent communications to Israel. "We want you to use all means to avoid the outbreak of an armed conflict which would have serious consequences for international peace and security," the note said. "We turn to you in order to avoid creating in the world another center of war, which would bring suffering without end. . .it is necessary to find ways to settle the conflict by unwarlike means." 51/

These Soviet contacts paralleled similar efforts made by the United States to dissuade both Israel and Egypt from striking first. 52/ Bilateral Soviet-American exchanges also showed Moscow's objective to be the avoidance of an Arab-Israeli military showdown. On the other hand, for deterrent purposes, Moscow continued to hold out the prospect of active opposition if Israel took the initiative. On May 27 the Kremlin advised President Johnson that it had information of an Israeli plan to attack, and threatened to intervene. In Johnson's words, "The Soviets stated that if Israel starts military action, the Soviet Union will extend help to the attacked state." What the exact nature of Soviet "help" would be is unclear, but the President used the warning to good effect. His strong urging that Israel "must not take preemptive military

action." is said to have tipped the balance in the Israeli cabinet against going to war in a close vote on May 28. 53/

Stage 3 (June 5-11). The outbreak of war on June 5 appears to have caught the Soviet Union by surprise. When by the end of May there had been no Israeli military response to the closing of the straits, it may have believed that Israel lacked the will to fight. Its assessment of the Arab-Israeli balance may have misled it into expecting that the massive, united Arab show of force would be a sufficient deterrent to Israeli initiative, and its contacts in Syria and Egypt confirmed that the Arabs would not attack first. Indeed, during the last week before the war, the Soviet Union behaved as if the crisis had peaked. Brezhnev, Kosygin, and Defense Minister Grechko left Moscow for a ceremonial visit to the Soviet fleet in Murmansk and Archangel that lasted several days, and Podgorny spent much of this period on a state visit to Afghanistan. Just before hostilities began, the only Soviet cruiser in the Mediterranean and ten other ships of the fleet were sighted lying at anchor one hundred miles north of Crete. 54/

The beginning of hostilities galvanized the Soviet leadership into action. Within a few hours, Premier Kosygin had activated the hot line for the first time in a crisis to convey to the United States Soviet concern about the fighting and the need for superpower cooperation to bring about a cease-fire. 55/ This, plus the inactivity of the Mediterranean Squadron during the first day of the war, clearly indicated to Washington

Moscow's desire to stay out of the fighting. Indeed, the Six-Day War phase was characterized by repeated communications between the two countries, through the hot line and diplomatic channels and by the behavior of their naval forces in the area, to assure each other that their intent was not aggressive. Once the early reports from the war zone had confirmed the destruction of the Arab air forces by the initial Israeli onslaught, the Soviet operational objective became one of minimizing Arab territorial losses while endeavoring to remain uninvolved in the hostilities and avoid a confrontation with the United States.

In keeping with its posture before the war, the USSR's main effort on behalf of its Arab clients was diplomatic, particularly in the United Nations. By the afternoon of June 6, despite reported Arab opposition, it had agreed to a Security Council resolution calling for a cease-fire in place and had dropped its demand for simultaneous Israeli withdrawal to the prewar lines. Caution and the absence of unusual military activity prevailed almost without exception. Only two cases have been recorded that suggest an effort to use military means to obtain specific policy objectives, and these contain ambiguities about either Soviet intentions or the purposefulness of the activity.

The first instance was the systematic harassment of the Sixth Fleet aircraft carrier America and its companion task force on the fourth day of the war, June 8. Two Soviet warships, one a destroyer and the other a patrol craft, repeatedly intruded into the America formation, at times on a collision course with U.S. units. The patrol

boat "concentrate" on the America, twisting in and out around the 77,000 ton carrier in dangerous maneuvers, attempting to force her to alter her course." The harassment continued for several hours, despite repeated demands by U.S. commanders that the Soviet ships withdraw. 56/

Since incidents of this type were fairly common (similar though less sustained interference had been engaged in by a Soviet destroyer with the same task group the day before), it is difficult to evaluate with confidence the significance of any one of them. In this particular case, the situation was further muddled by the fact that the task group was tracking a Soviet submarine that had been detected near the America on the previous afternoon. The obstructive maneuvers may have been intended to disrupt this pursuit, sparing the submarine the humiliation of a forced surfacing. 57/

An alternative explanation is that these actions were ordered by higher political authorities to make U.S. decisionmakers more aware of the Soviet Mediterranean presence at a time of increasing Soviet uneasiness about the course of events in the Arab-Israeli conflict. If this was the purpose, all indications are that it did not affect Washington's perceptions or behavior. By June 7 the Egyptian defeat in Sinai was turning into a rout; deprived of air cover and faced with a collapsing communications network and a demoralized officer corps, Egyptian forces began to surrender en masse and largely ceased to defend against Israeli advances across the peninsula. On the eastern front, although Jordan had accepted the first cease-fire call on June 6, the fighting continued as Israel demanded that both Egypt and Syria also cease fire. Cease-fire



calls on June 6 and 7 having gone unheeded, the United States and the Soviet Union on June 8 each submitted a draft of another cease-fire resolution that reflected for the first time the major differences between the superpowers. The American draft reaffirmed the terms of the previous resolutions and demanded compliance by the combatants; the Soviet version explicitly condemned Israel for aggression and demanded both a stop to the fighting and Israeli withdrawal behind the armistice lines. 58/ Neither draft was voted on, but the debate emphasized the breakdown of unanimity and the increasing tension between Moscow and Washington. The Soviet reversal was almost certainly meant not as a legitimate change of position on the terms of a cease-fire but as a warning to the United States that, if Israel was not restrained, Moscow might give active support to the hard-line Arab position.

By the evening of June 8 both Jordan and the UAR had announced their willingness to accept a cease-fire, and on the following day Syria did so as well. While fighting subsided on the other fronts, Syrian-Israeli battles on the Golan Heights continued, however, as Israel launched a full-scale offensive on the morning of June 9 to capture the heights. By midmorning on June 10, most of the heights had fallen and the city of Quneitra was being abandoned by the Syrians. The road to Damascus appeared open, and Syrian leaders may have seriously feared an Israeli advance on the capital. Although it is not known whether Syria's government appealed to Moscow for direct military intervention, semi-official Syrian bodies, such as the General Federation of Syrian Trade

Unions, called on their counterparts in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe--as well as Peking--"to urge your governments to extend immediate military aid," alleging that "hundreds of enemy planes are attacking Damascus and the other Syrian towns, destroying civilian homes and killing thousands of citizens." 59/

This deteriorating situation in Syria brought about the only explicit Soviet threat of military intervention during the six-day conflict. It was conveyed in a hot-line message addressed by Premier Kosygin to President Johnson, and received at 9:05 a.m. EST on June 10. According to the Johnson memoirs,

The Soviets accused Israel of ignoring all Security Council resolutions for a cease-fire. Kosygin said a "very crucial moment" had now arrived. He spoke of the possibility of "independent decision" by Moscow. He foresaw the risk of a "grave catastrophe" and stated that unless Israel unconditionally halted operations within the next few hours, the Soviet Union would take "necessary actions, including military." 60/

At the same time, the Israeli ambassador in Moscow was handed a note that charged Israel with ignoring Security Council resolutions and "proceeding in the direction of Damascus," after occupying Syrian territory; warned that "should Israel not immediately stop its war activities, the Soviet Union, together with other peace-loving States, will apply sanctions, with all resulting consequences"; and informed Israel that the USSR had decided to break off diplomatic relations forthwith. 61/ On June 10 Pravda also carried the text of a statement on the situation in the Middle East issued the day before by a hastily called summit meeting in Moscow of the Communist party leaders of

Bulgaria, Hungary, East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and the USSR. It accused Israel of "barbarically bombing cities in Syria," and pledged the states signing this statement to "do everything necessary to help the peoples of the Arab countries deal a resolute rebuff to the aggressor, protect their legal rights, extinguish the hotbed of war in the Near East and restore peace in this area" if Israel did not stop its aggression and withdraw behind the armistice lines. 62/

Two aspects of Soviet behavior on June 10 are worth noting here. Despite the urgency of the situation, only the secret communication directed to the United States spoke of possible military steps. The direct target of potential Soviet military action--Israel--was merely warned of unspecified "sanctions" to be applied multilaterally with the participation of "other peace-loving States," a formulation clearly not intended to conjure up the menace of an impending military move. Second, the Soviet Union refrained from any demonstration of force or low-key but deliberately detectable military preparations for intervention that might have enhanced the credibility of its threat. Only one report of a potentially related Soviet military action has appeared. On the morning of the Soviet warning, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Earle Wheeler, is said to have commented that Soviet capabilities for intervention in the Middle East were minimal, although "they have alerted their paratroop divisions." 63/ If this alert did take place, it would constitute a second known instance--in addition to the harassment of the America--of Soviet military

activity related to the 1967 war. In any case, the Soviet moves do not appear to have worried American decisionmakers sufficiently to be mentioned in their accounts of these events. 64/ Nevertheless, the teletyped warning alone apparently achieved the Soviet purpose: Washington immediately made strong representations to Israel to stop the advance into Syria. 65/ By noon (Washington time) on June 10, an effective cease-fire had been achieved.

The Soviet Union's tepid show of support for its Arab clients as they went down to total defeat was received with dismay in Damascus and Cairo. Nonetheless, Nasser clearly understood Moscow's fear of precipitating a superpower clash and apparently made no attempt to use the Russians to take a more active role. 66/ Indeed, despite widespread anger and disenchantment with the Soviet Union--expressed in adverse media commentary and attacks by mobs on Soviet embassies and citizens in Cairo, Algiers, and other "friendly" capitals--after the war he sought to involve Moscow in Egypt's security much more intimately, even requesting in late June that the USSR take over the air defense of Egypt, both because his own smashed army could not fulfill this task and because he wished Moscow to commit itself to an active military role in the regional conflict. 67/

For the most part, the Soviet eskadra--the only instrument available to the Russians for the regional projection of military power between June 5 and 10, 1967--behaved as if no Middle East war was under way. A few minor adjustments in routine procedures were made; for instance, Sixth Fleet carriers were closely trailed by several Soviet units instead

of by just one, as was the usual practice. 68/ At one point, on June 8, the only Soviet cruiser in the Mediterranean approached to within five miles of the America. 69/ But these activities were negligible compared with the extensive American use of naval forces during the war.

On two separate occasions, the two U.S. carrier task groups approached the eastern shore of the Mediterranean from their holding stations south of Crete. The first was on the morning of June 6, when Moscow insisted on the imposition of a UN cease-fire calling for the retreat of all forces behind prewar lines. The U.S. task forces sailed some hundred miles eastward in the course of the day. By 6:30 p.m., as the Egyptian position in Sinai deteriorated further, the Soviet Union was ready to agree to an unconditional cease-fire, which was duly passed by the Security Council and announced by President Johnson in a televised statement at 8:00 p.m. One hour later, the Sixth Fleet was ordered to steam back to its earlier position south of Crete. 70/

The second instance was on June 10 immediately after receipt of Kossygin's threat of military intervention against Israel. At 9:30 a.m. the ships were ordered to sail at full speed toward the Syrian coast in a move explicitly designed, in Johnson's words, to convey to Moscow the "message . . . that the United States was prepared to resist Soviet intrusion in the Middle East." By 12:30 p.m. a Syrian-Israeli cease-fire was in effect, and the ships were ordered back half an hour later. 71/

Another flurry of activity involving the Sixth Fleet took place on June 8 in connection with Israel's attack on the U.S. intelligence ship Liberty, which was some fifteen miles off Gaza. Two flights of fighter aircraft were scrambled from the carriers to provide cover for the stricken ship and several combatants were dispatched to the area. The Soviet Union was informed of these actions over the hot line. 72/

What is perhaps most remarkable about these incidents from the perspective of this study is the lack of any recorded response by the Soviet navy. Furthermore, at no point during the six days of hostilities in the Middle East did Soviet ships engage in similar maneuvers or act in a manner that might be interpreted as a war-related "show of force" or "showing of the flag." Beyond the interference with the America's task force on June 8, Soviet naval behavior seems, in fact, to have been deliberately orchestrated to reassure the United States that the Mediterranean Squadron did not intend to take any part in the crisis.

#### The October War

In October 1973 the USSR had to face the major problem confronting it in its Middle East policy since the early 1960s, when it became a regional power with a permanent military presence, entrenched interests, and strong patron-client ties with local governments. Pared down to its fundamentals, this problem can be described as the necessity for choosing between two desirable courses of action that could not be pursued

simultaneously in a crisis: on the one hand, maintaining a stable relationship with the United States and the West; on the other hand, supporting Arab clients in their dispute with Israel with the intensity required to maintain Soviet-Arab relations on an even keel. To this problem the Soviet Union had no easy solution, for its policy in the region was constrained by three considerations: continued assured access to Middle Eastern oil and the security of Israel were held by the West to be vital interests, which could not be threatened without evoking a forceful response; for the Arab states--Egypt and Syria in particular--active confrontation with Israel until the basic Palestine dispute was resolved acceptably was a national political and military priority; and the Soviet Union's own presence and leverage in the Arab world rested heavily on its role as a major supplier of the sophisticated weapons required by the Arabs to sustain a credible anti-Israel posture.

It inescapably followed that Soviet Middle East policy, to be successful, had to maintain a fine balance between active and demonstrable solidarity with the Arabs and avoidance of dangerous and counterproductive confrontations with the United States. This necessitated the imposition of limits both on the military capabilities the Soviet Union was willing to put in Arab hands and on the political goals it could afford to be associated with.

Between the June 1967 and October 1973 wars, the nature of these limits was clearly established, with significant resultant strains on

Soviet-Arab, and especially Soviet-Egyptian, relations. Thus after the 1967 debacle, while moving quickly to rebuild the Egyptian and Syrian armies, Moscow urged Nasser to seek a political solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. 73/ Shortly before the Nixon administration came into office, Moscow sent a diplomatic note to Washington "urging a more active search" for a settlement. 74/ In the first half of 1969 bilateral Soviet-American discussions began; these were supplemented by four-power talks in which the British and French participated. In these and subsequent contacts with Washington within the growing framework of detente diplomacy, the Soviet Union hewed closely to the Arab position, demanding total Israeli withdrawal and satisfaction of Palestinian rights. Nevertheless, Moscow urged its Arab clients to accept both Israel's existence behind the June 4, 1967, lines and peace treaties with Tel Aviv. Further irredentist Arab claims did not enjoy Russian support.

This political posture was coupled with an arms supply policy aimed at restoring sufficient Arab military power to deter Israeli "provocations" and enable Egypt and Syria to negotiate a settlement from a position of strength but not to initiate war. Long-range, offensive weapons systems wanted by Cairo, such as the MIG-23, were withheld before the 1973 war; shipments of weapons and training schedules were subject to many delays; needed spare parts and consumables were released in limited quantities; and often weapons promised were not sent. Arguments about arms supply . . . were the main theme of all four visits" Sadat made to



Moscow after assuming power. 75/

Moscow capitalized heavily on its immediate response to Egyptian and Syrian military needs in the aftermath of the 1967 defeat to strengthen its military presence in the region, primarily the naval component. Access to Egyptian harbors for repairs, reprovisioning, and off-duty berthing permitted the establishment of a more balanced and much enlarged permanent fleet in the Mediterranean at a tolerable cost, and substantially enhanced the political and prestige value of the eskadra. Scarcely a week after the 1967 hostilities ended, three cruisers, five destroyers, and two auxiliaries were added. 76/ Some of these ships paid extended visits to Port Said and Alexandria in July-September and became "permanent" guests in October, ostensibly to deter Israeli air attacks on Egyptian harbors. 77/ At the time of the Jordanian crisis of September 1970, the Soviet Union deployed twenty-three surface combatants and thirteen to fifteen submarines, more than double the force they had available during the Six-Day War. After this crisis the eskadra's normal composition was stabilized at ten to thirteen submarines, fourteen to twenty-two surface combatants, and twenty-three to twenty-six auxiliaries; 78/ in other words, it leveled off at about the peak strength occasioned by the crisis. On the eve of the October War, there were seventeen surface combatants, which were steadily increased to twenty-six by October 24 and to an all-time high of ninety-six by October 31, following the U.S. nuclear alert. The firepower of the squadron was even more dramatically upgraded in the final stages of the war in direct response to American actions:

the number of surface-to-surface missile launchers was more than doubled, from forty on October 24 to eighty-eight on October 31, and the number of surface-to-air missile launchers was increased from twenty-eight to forty-six. 79/

The 1967-73 period thus witnessed a gradual but marked change in the naval balance. Whereas in 1967 the United States enjoyed absolute superiority, by 1973 the eskadra had acquired sufficient capability to neutralize the Sixth Fleet in regional crises. 80/ The American advantage in tactical air support remained strong, but the Soviet Union gained some political ground with the deployment of helicopter carriers from 1968 on, either in the Mediterranean or in the Black Sea on short call, and the use of Egyptian airfields as home bases for naval intelligence aircraft that often overflew Western navies in the Mediterranean after 1967.

After the expulsion of Soviet troops from Egypt in July 1972 and Sadat's increasing public remonstrances, Moscow's concern over the possible waning of its influence in the area prompted a relaxation of restraints on arms supplies. In the year preceding the October War, SAM-6 missiles, the late-model Sukhoi-20 ground attack aircraft, and the modern T-52 tank were provided. A "strategic" offensive weapon with an assured capability of penetrating Israel's air defenses--the SCUD medium-range missile--was also made available for the first time. 81/ Whether in the fall of 1973 Moscow was willing to support a military action to avoid further deterioration of its relations with the Arabs or whether it believed Sadat's war threats were mere posturing is not clear. What is clear, however, is that it continued to counsel Egypt

against war, both publicly and privately, 82/ and simultaneously beefed up the Arab armies, to hedge against the possibility of a politically ruinous Arab collapse like that of 1967 if war came. So long as the cease-fire was not breached, Moscow could follow the two-track policy of diplomatic peacemaking and military resupply with relative ease. Once hostilities began, however, a choice had to be made between hard-earned Arab friendship and stable relations with the United States.

#### Soviet Behavior

No attempt will be made here to describe in detail the course of the war or account for the multitude of military and political interactions of the major actors--Israel, Egypt, Syria, the United States, and the USSR--that made up its history. The focus will be on Soviet behavior insofar as it related to the use or contemplated use of Soviet military forces to directly affect the course of events or to signal intentions and objectives.

Seen from this perspective, the crisis can be divided into four phases:

1. October 1-5: Immediately before the war; dissociation from the Arab war effort;
2. October 6-9: Arab offensive; search for an early cease-fire; assessment of the results of the Egyptian-Syrian offensive; decision to begin resupplying weapons;
3. October 10-22: Israeli counterattack; massive resupply by air and sea; renewed efforts to obtain a cease-fire; Kosygin's visit to Cairo; negotiation of the cease-fire with Kissinger in Moscow;
4. October 23-26: Cease-fire breakdown; warning to Israel; intervention threat to the United States; U.S. alert; third cease-fire holds.

October 1-5. Between the time it was notified by Sadat of an imminent military initiative 83/ and the outbreak of fighting on October 6, the Soviet Union took a number of steps designed to signal the United States both that it was not an active partner in its clients' projected campaign and that it wished to remain uninvolved in the crisis. On October 4 and 5 it hastily and overtly evacuated its military advisers and their dependents from Egypt and Syria, a move that angered the Arabs because of the chance it might tip off the Israelis. Simultaneously, and for the first time since October 1967, all units of the Mediterranean Squadron in Port Said put out to sea; the Nikolaev, lead ship of the new Kara-class guided-missile cruisers and the largest Soviet naval unit in the Mediterranean, returned to the Black Sea on October 5; and the squadron's general disposition in the Mediterranean remained unchanged, reflecting peacetime conditions and behavior. 84/

To the Arabs, these measures conveyed the unmistakable message that Moscow was washing its hands of the entire affair and that they could not count on it to bail them out if their military offensive came to grief. Through the ambassador in Cairo, Vladimir Vinogradov, Brezhnev had informed Sadat, in response to the latter's message that a resumption of fighting was imminent, that "the Soviet Union would give him the support of a friend ." 85/ However, the evacuation of Soviet personnel and the general Soviet attitude was read in Cairo as demonstrating, in Sadat's words, a "total lack of confidence in us and our fighting ability." 86/ It made the Egyptians wonder if "it reflect[ed] some aspect of the global

balance of power, and if so might it be that the Russians were not going to give us the help we were expecting?" 87/

While there is no available information on what transpired in the inner councils of the Kremlin during those first days in October, it is safe to assume that it was decided to safeguard detente even if it meant another Arab military defeat. The significance of the Soviet position in this prewar phase is that the Arabs were being left to their fate at a time when experts agreed that a war would lead to a quick and conclusive Israeli victory. What must have worried Soviet leaders at this point was the possibility that a quick Arab collapse accompanied by Israeli attacks in the interior, with Soviet units or personnel as planned or unwitting targets, might force Moscow to intervene in the fighting. Hence the alacrity with which Soviet personnel and naval units were withdrawn.

Was Soviet behavior also intended to alert the United States, in the hope that consequent U.S. and Israeli deterrent measures might dissuade Sadat from going ahead with his plans? This is an intriguing and not farfetched possibility. Moscow did not know the exact date of the attack at the time the decision to evacuate was made, and it may have believed sufficient time was available to exert diplomatic pressure on Cairo. After all, Sadat had set other war deadlines in the past and later canceled them. The Soviet Union may not even have been averse to triggering an Israeli mobilization, such as the one the previous May when an Egyptian attack had appeared in the making. The Israelis had not

preempted on that occasion, and political circumstances, as well as the reputed state of the Arab-Israeli military balance, were such that Moscow may have assigned a low probability to the contingency of Israeli preemption in October. If the Israelis mobilized again and Washington made strong representation in Cairo--Kissinger might even have advanced his announced plan to launch a diplomatic initiative in November 88--war might be averted. While this analysis must remain speculative, there can be little doubt that the Soviet Union regarded the approaching events with foreboding and worry about the potential effect of another Arab defeat on its interests in the Middle East.

October 6-9. Fear of an immediate Arab collapse was proved unfounded in the first two days of the war, when Egyptian forces in the west rapidly overwhelmed the "Bar-Lev" line of Israeli defenses along the Suez Canal with few casualties and established beachheads several miles deep along the Sinai banks of the waterway, and when Syria's two-pronged armored assault succeeded in breaking through stubborn Israeli defensive lines (though sustaining heavy tank losses) and in regaining most of the southern half of the Golan area. In these efforts, the Arab armies appeared to have mastered the use of their sophisticated equipment, particularly antitank and antiaircraft missiles, of which they had large quantities and the Israeli air force seemed largely neutralized. The strategic surprise achieved by the Arab offensive had earned the attacking forces a few days to consolidate their gains before the Israeli war machine could mobilize fully and counterattack.

The two superpowers reacted to the outbreak of war with restraint and evident wariness. The crisis caught the United States in the thick

of the Watergate crisis, which had practically paralyzed the government and diverted the President's attention almost exclusively to his own political survival. Although, in contrast with 1967, the country was no longer militarily involved in a foreign war, the Vietnam experience had created strong popular and congressional resistance to activism in foreign affairs, particularly in areas like the Middle East, where the possibility of military engagement was, in everyone's mind, always high. Further reinforcing the need for caution was the heightened American perception of a strong Soviet military presence in the area, especially its naval capabilities in the Mediterranean. Finally, American political objectives--resumption of a diplomatic dialogue and improved relations with the Arabs in order to move toward a political settlement--would be best served by a course of action that minimized negative repercussions on budding but tenuous U.S.-Egyptian relations but remained responsive to the demands of the special relation with Israel and faithful to standing commitments to Israeli security. From the early days of the war, American diplomacy--principally managed by Henry Kissinger--was aimed at ending the hostilities on terms that would promote, not hinder, postwar settlement efforts: an early cease-fire based neither on an Arab victory with Soviet arms nor on an Israeli success that would make peace negotiations politically and psychologically impossible again. At the same time, the crisis was held to be "crucial for U.S.-Soviet relations. If collaboration worked, detente would take on real meaning . . . . The worst outcome for the United States would be to appear crippled by the domestic crisis over Watergate." 89/ Although

one of the two carrier task groups of the Sixth Fleet--the Independence and its escorts--was ordered by President Nixon to steam from Athens harbor to a holding zone south of Crete on October 6 "as a visible sign of American power," 90/ beyond this precautionary move the Sixth Fleet carried on with business as usual. The second U.S. aircraft carrier, the Franklin D. Roosevelt, which was on a port visit in Barcelona, remained there until its scheduled departure on October 10. 91/ No reinforcements of the fleet were carried out during this first phase.

The USSR had an urgent interest in an early cease-fire since it expected a crushing Israeli counterattack in short order. Barely six hours after the war began, Vinogradov in Cairo unsuccessfully sought Sadat's agreement to a cease-fire in place preserving early Arab territorial gains. 92/ In bilateral diplomatic contacts with the United States, at the United Nations and between Kissinger and Ambassador Dobrynin in Washington, and in correspondence between Brezhnev and Nixon, the Soviet Union appeared "very conciliatory" and cooperative, and the Soviet media downplayed news of the war. 93/ Soviet naval units continued to steam away from the zone of combat, and no additional ships entered the Mediterranean from the Black Sea. 94/ In fact, the squadron's surface strength was decreased the day before the outbreak of war with the return of the cruiser Nikolaev and two other smaller units to the Black Sea, although the submarine component began to increase.

The ease with which the Bar-Lev line fell doomed the immediate Soviet operational objective, a quick cease-fire. The Egyptians have since stated that their war aims were not to regain territory, but "to



bleed the enemy." 95/ However, if Egypt had suffered losses as heavy as the Syrians' in their first two days on the Golan Heights, it might have been satisfied with its achievements of October 6-7. Sadat's determination to fight on, his persistent requests for arms, and the serious depletions of Syrian tanks and antiaircraft missiles in the vicious Golan fighting compelled the Soviet leadership on October 8 and 9 to make a number of crucial decisions based on a reassessment of the situation on the ground. These decisions were made when the Israelis were in the midst of successful counterattacks in the east that would, by October 10, push all Syrian troops back behind prewar lines. And an Israeli decision to begin strategic bombing of Syria resulted on October 9 in its accidentally striking the Soviet cultural center in the Syrian capital and causing several casualties.

Unable to seek a cease-fire resolution at the United Nations in opposition to Arab wishes and pleasantly surprised by its clients' military performance, the Soviet Union moved to provide Egypt and Syria with direct political and military support to enable them to pursue a more prolonged war effort. Several political measures were taken to boost Arab fighting capabilities: Iraq was encouraged to replace Syria's tank losses from its own stockpiles until Soviet replenishments could be airlifted and to send fighting units to the front; 96/ Brezhnev, in private letters to a number of Arab leaders, urged similar active support for the front-line states while alluding to the "complexities" of the international situation, which presumably limited Moscow's ability to provide direct aid; 97/ pressure on Sadat in behalf of a cease-fire was

eased, though not lifted completely. 98/ The major decision--to begin a vast resupply of the Arab armies by air and sea--was probably taken on October 9. 99/ Beginning on October 10, 12,500 tons of war material were delivered to Egypt, Syria, and Iraq by air during the course of the war, and 58,000 tons were sent by sea to Egypt and Syria. 100/ Equipment provided included major weapons, such as tanks and fighter aircraft, and a whole range of consumables, including surface-to-air missiles. The Syrians were desperate for this aid, having used up almost all their SAMs during the first few days of fighting.

Also, all seven Soviet airborne divisions were placed in an increased state of readiness on October 8 101/ for the remainder of the war. It was not clear whether this was primarily connected with the contingency of a possible Soviet intervention or was a precautionary move taken once it appeared that an early cease-fire was not in the cards. Apparently U.S. decisionmakers were not alarmed by the move. It was not immediately reported by the media, and U.S. officials made no allusion to it. In his first extended press conference on the crisis, held on October 12, Secretary of State Kissinger--who had cautioned Moscow in a public address on October 8 that "detente cannot survive irresponsibility in any area, including the Middle East"--called Soviet behavior up to that point restrained and not irresponsible. "If you compare their conduct in this crisis to their conduct in 1967," he stated, "one has to say that Soviet behavior has been less provocative, less incendiary, and less geared to military threats than in the previous crisis." 102/

October 10-22. During this phase, the military initiative shifted decisively in Israel's favor. On October 10 Prime Minister Golda Meir announced that the entire Golan had been retaken, and on October 11-13 the Israelis pressed their successful counterattack into Syrian territory beyond the 1967 cease-fire lines. After tank battles which Iraqi, Moroccan, and Jordanian troops participated on the Arab side, the front stabilized along a line of ridges some twenty miles from Damascus; this line remained unchanged for the remainder of the war. The Israelis, though they failed to defeat the Syrian forces decisively, nevertheless occupied further territory and brought the outskirts of Damascus within reach of their long-range artillery.

On the Sinai front, the Egyptians, who had paused to consolidate their newly won positions on the eastern bank and successfully repulsed several badly coordinated Israeli armored attacks, launched a disastrous tank offensive on October 14, designed to take some pressure off the Syrian front and perhaps gain control of the strategic Mitla and Gidi passes. Without their missile antiaircraft defense umbrella, Egyptian armor fell victim to unchallenged Israeli air force attacks and to the superior range of Israeli tanks and better mobile marksmanship of Israeli crews. The Egyptian defeat in this major tank battle was probably decisive in allowing the Israelis on October 15-16 to cross the Suez Canal to the western bank, which turned the tide of the war; an armored Israeli brigade, in destroying part of the Egyptian air defense system, created a defensive gap between the Second and Third Armies deployed in

Sinai that was quickly exploited by the Israelis, who poured in reinforcements and extended their salient sharply. By October 19 the Egyptian Third Army was in danger of encirclement and the road to Cairo was open (the Egyptians had committed most of the First Army's armored units, originally deployed between the canal and the capital, to the battle of October 14). On this day, President Sadat signaled his readiness to accept a cease-fire, which was adopted by the Security Council two days later.

Despite this turn for the worse in Arab military fortunes, Soviet behavior during this phase remained as before; it included efforts to secure a cease-fire, resupplying the Arab combatants with weapons, and no significant or provocative show or use of military force. On the diplomatic front, the highlights of this period were Premier Kosygin's visit to Cairo on October 16-19 to obtain Egyptian acquiescence in a cease-fire proposal and the actual negotiation of an end to hostilities by Brezhnev, Gromyko, and Kissinger on October 20-21 in Moscow. In the early stages of the war, the Soviet Union had pressed for a cease-fire in place tied to a demand for total Israeli withdrawal from territories conquered in 1967; later, after Syrian reverses, it had privately informed the United States that it would support an immediate unconditional cease-fire; 103/ by the time Kissinger flew to Moscow, Israeli advances west of the Suez Canal had forced the USSR and Egypt to accept a UN-resolution that tied to the cease-fire a call for "immediate" negotiations between the parties to implement UN Resolution 242.

The airlift and sealift of military material continued throughout this phase and until October 23. The Syrian airlift, which totaled 3,750 tons, peaked on October 15 and remained fairly high until the 22d. Most of the weapons airlifted to Egypt--about 6,000 tons--arrived October 17-23. Altogether, 934 flights were made by AN-12 (loading capacity: 10 tons) and AN-22 (loading capacity: 50 tons) air transports. U.S. C-5 and C-141 planes carrying 22,395 tons of war supplies made 566 trips to Israel. 104/

The Soviet sealift reportedly included a total of twenty-five ships which, after passing through the Bosphorus between October 7 and 23, headed for either Latakia or Alexandria. 105/ Some of these shipments, particularly those of October 7-9 (on three ships), were probably carrying peacetime merchandise and military-related products from the Soviet Union. (In the months before the war and for most of 1973, an average of seven ships unloaded military equipment in Egyptian and Syrian ports every month. 106/) A peak in the sealift was not reached until the last days of the war; nine vessels passed through the Turkish straits between October 20 and 22 (five of them on the last date). Thus most of the equipment sent by sea was not used in the conflict.

The large resupply effort, the role it played in enabling Egypt and Syria to wage the war beyond the first week, the diverse military measures that Soviet forces were compelled to take to protect the operation, and the extensive, direct involvement of Soviet military personnel in the airlift and sealift make this episode significant. The operation was initiated and carried out during a crisis and had an

important bearing on its course and outcome; it engaged large military contingents of three services not only in the logistical transportation effort but also in protecting it from hostile interference by opposing military forces; and it was a major and clearly intentional demonstration of Soviet commitments and purposes in the crisis.

From the outset, the Politburo was certainly aware that the airlift and sealift would assume the proportions of a full-scale military operation, which would place Soviet personnel in jeopardy. As the relevant decisions were being made in the Kremlin, the Israeli air force was bombing Damascus. In subsequent days, most Syrian airfields, including those used by Soviet transports, were repeatedly attacked and damaged. Syrian harbors were also bombed. Several Soviet aircraft were damaged or destroyed on the ground during the airlift, and a Soviet merchant ship, the Ilya Mechnikov, was sunk while lying at anchor in the port of Tartus on October 12. 107/ This last incident occasioned the first of two Soviet warnings to Israel during the war. It stated that there must be "an immediate stop to the bombings of peaceful towns in Syria and Egypt and the strict observance by Israel of the norms of international law, including those regarding the freedom of navigation. The continuation of criminal acts by Israel will lead to grave consequences for Israel itself." 108/ To keep sea-lanes open and provide protection for Soviet shipping, a number of units from the Mediterranean Flotilla, including surface combatants, converged on the area between the eastern tip of Cyprus and the Syrian coast, and remained on patrol there until the U.S.

alert of October 24. 109/ To guard against Israeli air strikes, air-defense missile batteries, reportedly under exclusive Soviet operation and control, appeared at Latakia and Damascus. 110/ Because of the damage to Syrian harbors, Soviet amphibious-lift ships were used to transport equipment, which was offloaded on the beaches. In addition to naval and air-defense personnel, Soviet tank crews participated in the supply operation, ferrying tanks from Latakia and Tartus to Damascus because of a shortage of Syrian personnel. 111/

By mounting this massive operation, the Soviet Union signaled that there were limits to its inactivity in the crisis. Not only did it reverse its previous dissociation from the Arab military gamble; its heavy commitment, whose dimensions were clear by October 13, indicated to Washington and Tel Aviv that Moscow would not tolerate a decisive Arab defeat. More specifically, the Soviet action was a warning to Israel not to march on Damascus--a live option on October 12-13 and apparently discussed by the Israeli leadership. 112/ To the United States, the obvious message was that the USSR was now taking the Arab campaign under its wing and putting its prestige on the line in a way unprecedented in previous Arab-Israeli conflicts (except for the special case of the protracted war of attrition over the Suez Canal in the first half of 1970). 113/

At the same time, however, Moscow did not wish its position misunderstood by either its friends or its adversaries. When on the day the airlift began Dobrynin informed Kissinger of his government's willingness to press for an immediate unconditional cease-fire,

Kissinger, according to one account, having failed to obtain Israeli agreement to halt hostilities before the Arab armies had been pushed back, had to "persuade" Dobrynin "to delay his cease-fire call." 114/ Also, assurances were said to have been conveyed by Brezhnev to Washington both directly and through West German Chancellor Brandt, that "for him there is no question about the existence and viability of Israel" and that the Soviet Union did not wish to damage detente. 115/ In other words, the air- and sealoft did not mean Soviet support for unlimited Arab objectives or even for a continuation of the war, but rather a determination to see the fighting concluded under conditions that would not put the Arab clients at a political or psychological disadvantage.

Particularly striking is the way the resupply effort was downplayed to the Arabs. At no point during the war did Soviet media or official pronouncements explicitly mention the air- and sealoft, even in statements designed to defend the Soviet record against biting Chinese and radical Arab criticism of Moscow's lukewarm attitude toward the Arab "liberation" effort. More important, there is some evidence that the early shipments fell far short of Egyptian and Syrian expectations or requests. Although the Syrians obviously were resupplied with ample quantities of SAM-5 missiles (which they had apparently run out of by October 8) during the first days of the airlift, President Boumediene of Algeria claimed that early shipments consisted mostly of medical supplies and merchandise. 116/ His talks in Moscow on October 14-15 with Brezhnev, Kosygin, Podgorniy, Gromyko, and Grechko--which were triggered by Arab



dissatisfaction with the Soviet assistance--were said by Tass to have been conducted in a "frank and friendly atmosphere," clearly indicating disagreements. 117/ The tempo of the air- and sealift quickened after Boumediene's visit and reported arrangement of cash payment for the weapons. 118/ However, Arab disenchantment was not allayed.

Astonishingly, in major speeches both during and after the war, neither Sadat nor Assad so much as acknowledged the Soviet contribution to their military campaigns. When the resupply operation was at its peak during the second week of hostilities, Kosygin arrived in Cairo to persuade Sadat to stop the war. Thus, although forced by the heavy Syrian losses and the character of their relations with the Arabs to mount the airlift and sealift, the Russians were willing to pay a heavy price in the currency of forsaken propaganda and lost political value to ensure that it was not perceived by the Arab leaders as a green light for continuing the fighting.

While the Soviet signals appear to have been read accurately in Washington (and in the Arab capitals), the United States reacted by launching a similar air and sea resupply operation in behalf of Israel on October 13, after waiting two days in hopes that a cease-fire might materialize. An airlift had been asked for by Israel beginning in the early hours of the war, and domestic pressure on the Watergate-weakened administration was mounting. Besides, it was advisable to take precautionary measures in case the Russians were being duplicitous. The principal rationale behind the American airlift was to deny the Soviet Union the appearance of dictating the course of events with its weaponry. "The

main considerations . . . were to convince Sadat that a prolonged war of attrition, fueled by Soviet arms, would not succeed, and to demonstrate to the Kremlin that the United States was capable of matching Soviet military deliveries to the Middle East. Above all, for the sake of the future American position globally and in the region, Soviet arms must not be allowed to dictate the outcome of the fighting." 119/

Unlike the U.S. airlift to Israel, the Soviet resupply effort encountered little difficulty in eliciting third-country cooperation for transit purposes. Soviet transport planes bound for Egypt and Syria were readily granted permission to traverse Yugoslav, Turkish, and Greek air space. The main routes were over Yugoslavia, where flights originating in Hungary would cross the border over Subotica, about 120 miles north of Belgrade, follow a line from Subotica to Belgrade to Dubrovnik to reach the Adriatic, then fly over the Strait of Otranto on their way to the Mediterranean. Planes carrying supplies from Bulgarian stores crossed the Yugoslav border over Nish, some 120 miles southeast of Belgrade, then flew due west to reach the Adriatic over Dubrovnik and join the Adriatic route southward. Overflights were made mostly by day, and Soviet planes were said to carry no markings. Pilots declared type of aircraft and registration number to the control tower at Belgrade, but no information on destination or type of cargo was given or requested. Turkey, a member of NATO, did not allow Soviet military aircraft to overfly its territory, but permitted Aeroflot civilian transports to use its air space under existing commercial agreements. Greece, another NATO member, allowed Soviet overflights of

the Cyclades Islands but refused to allow the United States to use Greek bases in the military resupply of Israel. 120/

There were two other significant Soviet military measures during this intermediate phase: the alerting of three airborne divisions on October 11, and the gradual but continuing reinforcement of the naval squadron. Neither caused undue disquiet in Washington.

That seven Soviet airborne divisions had been placed in an increased state of readiness on October 8 became known in the United States on the night of October 10-11. 121/ The further upgrading of the alert status for three of these divisions on October 11 may have been designed as a deterrent to an Israeli march on Damascus. If so, it is not known whether the Soviet intent was successfully communicated by this action or what role it played in Israeli decisionmaking. The United States did not perceive a substantial danger of Soviet intervention, nor did news of the alert become public until several days later. 122/

Also during this period occurred the first increase in the surface combat strength of the Soviet navy, when a cruiser and two destroyers were moved into the Mediterranean from the Black Sea on October 10. Between October 12 and 24 another destroyer and one escort ship apparently were added. 123/ There were no indications of an increased alert status, even among the ships shadowing the U.S. task group nearest the war zone, in the area southeast of Crete. 124/ As if to emphasize the atmosphere of normality, the cruiser and one of the destroyers that had entered the Mediterranean on October 10 headed west and began port visits to Italy. 125/ Unlike the disruptive behavior of Soviet

naval units during the 1967 war, that of the squadron in 1973 was "restrained and considerate," according to Admiral Worth H. Bagley, Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Naval Forces, Europe. "In fact, they weren't overtly aggressive. It looked as though they were taking some care not to cause an incident." 126/ The only abnormal activity of the eskadra during this phase was the positioning of some units near Syrian ports in the war zone to protect Soviet ships, and the increase in the total number of surface combatant units from the "'normal' strength" of seventeen on October 5 to twenty-six by October 24. 127/

October 23-26. The cease-fire that went into effect the evening of October 22 in the battlefields did not last the night. By Tuesday morning, October 23, the Soviet embassy in Washington was in touch with Secretary Kissinger, accusing Israel of having "massively violated the cease-fire," and Moscow issued its second warning to Israel. 128/ Which side was responsible for the resumption of fighting was not clear, but it soon became apparent that Israeli forces were taking advantage of the situation to complete their encirclement of the Egyptian Third Army. Although a second resolution calling for a halt to the renewed warfare was passed by the Security Council on October 23, late that day the Egyptian naval base at Adabiyah, on the Gulf of Suez, fell to an advancing Israeli armored column, 129/ and on October 24 an attack was launched to occupy Suez City. Meanwhile, to the north, Israeli forces were on the outskirts of Ismailia, threatening the rear of the Second Army. 130/

It was in these circumstances that Egyptian President Sadat, who is said to have complained of Israeli violations almost hourly to both superpowers during this period, requested both Moscow and Washington to assume a direct role in enforcing the cease-fire. "You must," the identical messages are quoted as saying, "be in force on the ground to witness for yourselves Israeli violations of the cease-fire." 131/ At the UN, Egyptian Foreign Minister M. H. Zayyat urged the Security Council "to call on the Soviet Union and the United States . . . each to send forces immediately from the forces stationed near the area to supervise the implementation of the cease-fire." 132/

Although the United States immediately came out with a public statement opposing the injection of superpower forces into the conflict area, Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin informed Kissinger by telephone at 7:05 p.m. that the Soviet Union would support the Egyptian request at the UN. Shortly thereafter, in a second communication, he told the secretary of state that the Soviet delegation itself might introduce the resolution. About two hours later, the ambassador called again and told Kissinger he had "a very urgent" message from Brezhnev to Nixon. The stiffly worded four-paragraph text accused Israel of continued cease-fire violations that challenged its two architects, the Soviet Union and the United States. It stressed the need to "compel observance of the cease-fire without delay." To achieve this, Brezhnev wrote, "let us together . . . urgently dispatch Soviet and American contingents to Egypt." Then he added: "I will say it straight, that if you find it impossible to act with us in this matter, we should be faced with the necessity urgently to consider the question of taking appropriate steps

unilaterally. Israel cannot be allowed to get away with the violations." The threat was followed with a closing paragraph that sought to strike a conciliatory note: "I value our relationship." 133/

Believing that there was a "high probability" of some "unilateral Soviet move," the United States alerted most of its military forces shortly after midnight on October 25, upgrading the readiness of all units to no less than defense condition 3 status. Although no large Soviet intervention was feared, this response was reportedly to impress upon Moscow American unwillingness to accept any unilateral Soviet injection of military forces between the Middle East combatants. 134/ At the same time a message from Nixon to Brezhnev stated that the United States would consider a deployment of Soviet troops to the Middle East in violation of the June 1973 agreement between the two superpowers on the prevention of nuclear war. 135/

Although the full text of the Brezhnev note has not been published, there can be little doubt from reading the available excerpts that the Kremlin did intend to convey to the United States a clear warning that, unless the Israeli onslaught on the west bank of the Suez Canal was stopped at once, the USSR would intervene directly. Nor is there any doubt that the Soviet move was successful in prodding the United States into action. From all reports, Washington exerted heavy influence on Israel on October 25 to make no further attempts at military advances, to move into defensive positions, and to cease firing. During the two following days, after the cease-fire had generally taken hold, similarly harsh pressure was used to force Israel to allow food, water, medicines,

and other nonmilitary supplies to reach the Egyptian Third Army, 136/ whose forcible surrender the Israelis now sought to annul any possible Arab claims to military victory and strengthen their hand in postwar diplomacy. Immediately after the Soviet "ultimatum" and the U.S. alert, a third UN cease-fire order did prove effective, Israeli advances did stop, the Third Army did not fall, Suez was not taken, and Cairo was not further threatened. By October 28 small Soviet and American contingents of unarmed observers had joined a peacekeeping force made up of troops from nonpermanent Security Council member-states, 137/ the U.S. alert had been called off, and the 1973 war crisis was substantially over.

Whether the Israelis would have gone on to make further military gains if there had been no Soviet threat—that is, whether the Soviet move was superfluous—is another important but unanswerable question. In all likelihood, the United States would have acted to prevent an Egyptian debacle fatal to Kissinger's plans for an effective mediating role in the postwar search for a settlement. Moreover, the threat was issued at a time when the Israeli forward movement had run out of steam: the second cease-fire call had been heeded in many sectors of the front, UN teams were fanning out to supervise its implementation, Israel had already acceded to U.S. demands that the Third Army be provided with plasma and other humanitarian aid from Red Cross sources, and Israeli attacks on Suez and Ismailia had been repulsed with heavy losses. In his news conference of October 25 Secretary Kissinger stated that, until the previous evening (when the Soviet push for superpower intervention materialized), the U.S. government "had every reason to believe that the

basic direction that had been established, and to which all parties had agreed (that is, the cease-fire resolution), would in fact be implemented." 138/ On the other hand, in Cairo and Moscow there probably was great uncertainty about both Israeli intentions and U.S. willingness or ability to restrain its client. Any further Israeli movements closer to Cairo--even if there were no attempts to penetrate or surround the city--could be politically and psychologically disastrous for the Egyptian leadership. Just as crippling, however, was the continuing apparent intention of Israel to capture the Third Army. By the afternoon of October 24, no medical or other urgently needed supplies had actually been allowed to reach the encircled forces, Israeli troops having turned back three convoys sent by the Egyptian Red Crescent and the International Red Cross. 139/ In Tel Aviv, General Chaim Herzog--an authoritative, semiofficial commentator on military affairs during the war--stated on Israeli radio that the Third Army's only option was "surrender with honor." 140/ In making his appeal for direct joint superpower intervention, President Sadat probably sincerely believed that only such drastic action could stave off the worst.

Soviet leaders may have concurred in this assessment. It is likely that Brezhnev and his colleagues had by this time become upset at Washington's failure to carry out the bargain negotiated with Kissinger in Moscow three days earlier-- Arab agreement to postwar peace negotiations in exchange for Israeli compliance with and immediate implementation of the cease-fire. 141/ Also, Soviet credibility and



determination in relation not only to the Arabs but also to the other superpower were being severely tested. A forceful move was called for.

In any case, the Soviet Union must have calculated that it had little to lose by sponsoring Sadat's request. The call was for "joint" superpower action; it had already gained the endorsement of a number of Security Council members; the sending of forces would be part of a United Nations operation to enforce a resolution introduced by both the United States and the Soviet Union and almost unanimously supported by the council's members (the People's Republic of China had abstained from voting). At best, the United States would consent, in which case the Soviet Union would have gained a legitimate direct military role on the ground in the area. At worst, raising the issue would convey to Washington the urgency of the need to pressure Tel Aviv. In either case, useful credit would be earned with Sadat and disgruntled Arab public opinion generally.

In both 1956 and 1967 Moscow had threatened to come to the aid of its Middle Eastern friends in the closing stages of the crises, but in neither case had the threat been backed up with perceptible, serious military preparations for such a contingency. On October 25-26, 1973, although the beefed-up Mediterranean Squadron and the airlift to resupply Arab forces showed some potential for quick intervention, the Soviet Union continued to refrain from provocative shows of force or low-profile but threatening military preparations that might have added

significant military credibility to Brezhnev's conditional statement of intent. Even the Soviet military activities adduced at the time as having contributed to the decision of the United States to alert its forces--the naval buildup, the airlift stand down, the alerting of airborne troops, communications intercepts, the arrival of nuclear materials in Egypt--were sufficiently ambiguous to cast serious doubts on their status either as deliberate signals of a will to intervene or as bona fide preparations for impending unilateral action. As Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger admitted in his news conference of October 26, the United States and the Soviet Union "were very far away from a confrontation." About the U.S. alert, he added: "If the question refers to a military confrontation, under the circumstances I think that we were taking the actions that were necessary to preclude the development of a military confrontation." 142/

Although a major Soviet naval buildup did occur in the Mediterranean at the end of the war, it took place after the U.S. alert was declared and appears to have been a response to both the American show of force and Washington's own buildup of the Sixth Fleet, which occurred on October 25, when a third U.S. aircraft carrier, the John F. Kennedy, and its accompanying task group, and a second helicopter carrier, the Iwo Jima, with an 1,800-man marine assault force on board, passed through the Strait of Gibraltar and headed east to join the other two carriers near Crete. 143/ The increase in Soviet surface combat units from seventeen to twenty-six between October 5 and 24, while significant, was not unusual

in the circumstances. By October 31, however, the total of surface combatants had risen to thirty-four units, which included one cruiser. 144/ Seven submarines also arrived from the North Sea Fleet. By October 31 the Mediterranean Squadron was at its highest combat level ever. Its total strength "had increased to 96 vessels, including 34 surface combatants and 23 submarines, possessing a first launch capability of 88 Ssds, 348 torpedoes, 46 SAMs." 145/

Similarly, the activities of the Soviet navy, which had heretofore maintained a semblance of peacetime normality, changed after the U.S. alert had been declared in response to the American concentration of its naval forces southeast of Crete on October 25. According to the report of the Sixth Fleet commander:

On 25 October a Soviet surface action group (SAG) composed of a Kynda [cruiser] and a Kashin [destroyer] joined the Soviet units monitoring TG 60.2 [the aircraft carrier Independence and its escorts]. As other U.S. forces joined in the holding area, each task group was covered by a separate Soviet SAG which included an SSM and SAM capability. On 26 October, the Soviets began large-scale anti-carrier warfare (ACW) [exercises] against TF 60 with SSG and SSGN [guided missile submarines, diesel and nuclear] participation; this activity was conducted continuously for the six days following 27 October.... Both fleets were obviously in a high readiness posture for whatever might come next, although it appeared that neither fleet knew exactly what to expect. 146/

Previously the three U.S. task groups had been scattered the length of the Mediterranean, with the JFK group stationed just west of Gibraltar, to provide logistic support for the airlift to Israel. Their concentration only a few hundred miles from the battle zone represented a change of posture to one preparatory for offensive action, a move designed to enhance the credibility of the U.S. alert. 147/ The eskadra anticipated

this action by maneuvering into a position from which it could most effectively engage the carriers--with their ability to direct nuclear attacks against the Soviet heartland--in the unlikely contingency of full-scale combat between the superpowers. More immediately, and also more to the point, its new posture was meant to create an effective deterrent to any attempted intervention ashore on the Egyptian-Israeli front by Sixth Fleet forces. To this end a full surface action group was assigned to cover the U.S. amphibious units. According to Admiral Bagley, the Russians "deployed their ships and submarines so that our forces were targeted for instant attack from multiple points." 148/ In addition, several components of the eskadra, including ships earlier positioned off the Syrian coast, were relocated north of the Nile Delta 149/ and thus interposed between the Sixth Fleet and the battle zone. Despite the proximity of the two navies, however, there were no reported attempts by Soviet ships to interfere with Sixth Fleet operations.

Although the presence of amphibious lift ships among the units of the eskadra--augmented during the war from the normal one to three to a reported maximum of nine 150/--might be construed as evidence of Soviet plans to use the navy for intervention, Western intelligence knew that these vessels carried few troops and were actually loaded with supplies for Syria and Egypt--that is, they were used to supplement merchant ships in sealift operations. On October 24-25 two of the troop carriers were reportedly awaiting clearance through the Dardanelles to return to the Black Sea, and two others had already departed. 151/

Furthermore, these nine LSTs and LSMs together could have carried no more than 2,000 men. 152/ Had the Soviet Union decided to initiate military intervention in the Middle East around October 25, available evidence indicates that instruments other than the Mediterranean Squadron would have been relied on. The squadron's role would have been to deter and, failing deterrence, to complicate, limit, and obstruct counterintervention by the Sixth Fleet.

A related and even more ambiguous development was the reported transit on October 22 through the Dardanelles en route to Alexandria of a Soviet freighter that appeared to be carrying nuclear materials. The vessel arrived in the Egyptian harbor on the 25th, and when it departed an unspecified number of days later, it was still carrying neutron-emitting materials on board. Although U.S. intelligence sources are said to have ascertained the presence on Egyptian soil of equipment related to the Soviet-supplied SCUD missiles that indicates the missiles were armed with nuclear warheads, U.S. officials after the war denied that there was concrete evidence of nuclear weapons of Soviet origin in Egypt. In any case, the report on the arrival of the nuclear shipment in Egyptian waters did not reach Kissinger and other top decisionmakers until the morning of October 25, several hours after the alert had been ordered. 153/

Speculation that the detected nuclear materials were indeed weapons and that they were probably meant for the missiles of the eskadra 154/ rather than Egyptian forces must, given the paucity of verifiable information, remain at the level of conjecture. The presence

of the suspicious shipment in Alexandria is not in dispute, however. Regardless of the actual destination of the material, the Soviet Union did send a freighter into Alexandria with a nuclear load in the tense and delicate circumstances of October 25. Three days earlier, Egypt had deliverately fired two SCUDs at the Israeli forces in the Deversoir area west of the Suez Canal only moments before the first cease-fire was to have gone into effect. The actual firing had been conducted by Soviet crews, who were manning all the SCUD batteries. <sup>155/</sup> Sadat says he ordered the firing because he "wanted Israel to learn that such a weapon was indeed in our hands and that we could use it at a later stage of the war." <sup>156/</sup> On October 16 Sadat had warned Israel in his major speech of the war that surface-to-surface missiles would be used against Israel if Egypt were subjected to strategic bombing. "Our . . . . trans-Sinai . . . . rockets are now in their bases ready to be launched at the first signal to the deepest depth of Israel . . . . The Israelis should remember what I once said and still say: an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth and depth for depth." <sup>157</sup> In the rather desperate circumstances the Egyptian leadership faced on October 24-25, Sadat's warning might have been stretched to include an Israeli march on Cairo or further advances west of the canal. It is probably safe to say that a Soviet motive in allowing the nuclear shipment to Alexandria was to warn that continued Israeli progress on the west bank of the canal might precipitate a nuclearization of the Arab-Israeli conflict. This might have been expected to put more pressure on Washington to dissuade the Israelis from further action.

The developments most directly linked with the heightened threat of Soviet military intervention by U.S. spokesmen at the time of the alert were the increase in the readiness status of a number of Soviet airborne divisions on October 24 and the presumably related pause in the airlift to Syria and Egypt. 158/ U.S. intelligence first noted that Soviet airborne divisions had been alerted on October 11 (apparently three days after the alert had gone into effect). On October 23 it became known that the alert status had been further increased. 159/ At the same time, a diminution in airlift flights to Egypt and Syria was noticed on October 23, and all flights ceased on October 24. Late that afternoon, the Brezhnev note was delivered. The enhanced readiness status of the airborne forces does not seem to have unduly worried U.S. decisionmakers while the airlift was in full swing, but the stand-down suggested that transport aircraft were being freed for the eventuality of intervention. 160/ There were also reports on intercepted communications suggesting the movement of Soviet troops by air, the establishment of an airborne command post in southern Russia, and the spotting of a flight of some ten Antonov-22s heading toward Cairo. 161/

Yet all of these indicators were vague. The petering out of the airlift occurred in conjunction with the cease-fire and may have reflected a Soviet judgment that no further arms supplies were necessary. The sealift was interrupted at the same time. Five ships went through the Bosphorus on October 22, but only one on the 23d, and none on the 24th, for the first time since October 14. 162/ Preparedness measures detected in the Soviet Union for the transfer of troop contingents to the Middle East do not necessarily point to unilateral intervention.

They are easily explained by Moscow's attempt to persuade the Americans of the merits of sending a joint peacekeeping force on short notice and its logistic preparations for U.S. acceptance.

Thus the possibility that the Soviet Union was contemplating the unilateral injection of ground forces into Egypt if it became absolutely necessary to salvage Cairo's position cannot be ruled out. But the more reasonable inference from the scanty available evidence is that Soviet diplomatic moves and military signals were orchestrated on October 23-25 mainly to increase pressure on Washington to restrain the Israelis. From Moscow's perspective the Soviet objective must have appeared fairly limited and noncontroversial: to secure full implementation of a ceasefire that was already partially effective, that had been negotiated and cosponsored by the United States, and that had occurred when Washington's protege had a clear military advantage. For Brezhnev and his colleagues, the chance that they would have to act upon the threat contained in his note of October 24 must have seemed slight.

### Conclusions

How influential was the Soviet Union in shaping Egyptian and Israeli policies and behavior in the two crises and how closely did these conform to Soviet preferences? In 1967 the USSR played important roles in both the crisis of May 15 to June 5 and the subsequent Six Day War. It was a "loser" as a result of its Arab clients' defeat, but it was also a major



beneficiary of the outcome. Soviet actions were crucial in sparking the conflict in mid-May, and Soviet intervention on the last day of the war raised for a few hours the possibility of a superpower military confrontation. Yet of all the major participants in these events, on balance, Moscow's behavior was the most restrained, conservative, and cautious. While the local parties undertook armed hostilities that engaged all their military forces and the United States maneuvered sizable naval task forces near the combat area, threatened to break a blockade in disputed waters, and suffered an attack on one of its ships in which heavy casualties were inflicted, the USSR restricted itself largely to diplomatic demarches, political contacts, and the signalling of intentions through statements of policy and the media. The use of military instruments to influence events was resorted to sparingly, and when it was invoked, the circumstances were such that either the Soviet Union's intent was (purposely) unclear or its commitment and determination were doubted. In fact, it may be said that of all the means available to the Soviet Union to influence the course of events in the Middle East, military power was the one least used.

The primary Soviet objective was to deflect Israeli aggressive intentions from Syria alone onto the more powerful Syrian-Egyptian joint military capabilities. To achieve this, Moscow wanted the Egyptians to confront Israel with a more threatening posture without giving Israel sufficient provocation to launch a preemptive strike and unleash war. The Russians miscalculated their control over Egyptian behavior and passions, however, and started a momentum toward war that could not be stopped.

The Soviet Union tried to influence Israeli choices and policies by both threats and assurances. It wanted the Israelis to be sufficiently impressed by a united Arab front supported by Moscow and by a sense of near-abandonment by the United States, to enable the Arabs to win a symbolic victory while directing Israeli aggression away from the vulnerable Syrian regime.

The outcome of this was in the short run highly undesirable for the Soviet Union. Its own clients and the Israelis went beyond their assigned roles, and a reversal of roles took place: the Israelis emerged victorious and the Arabs suffered a humiliating defeat. But in the longer run this defeat turned out to be a victory of sorts for the Russians since it enabled them to become the badly needed protector of Egypt and Syria as never before.

In 1973 preferences and behavior were again asymmetrical: the Soviet Union preferred the Egyptians to pursue a political solution rather than war to attain their territorial and security objectives. It provided the Egyptian armed forces with large quantities of weapons, including up-to-date sophisticated systems, to increase the credibility to Israel of their deterrence and compellence, though making sure that these did not significantly alter the regional balance of power or provide its clients with a capability for launching a "war of annihilation." Soviet expectations were therefore sanguine: Egypt and its allies were to be made strong enough to deter a preemptive-preventive Israeli attack, but not strong enough to start a war. Toward Israel, the USSR seems to

have assumed in the early 1970s an attitude similar to that of 1967-- trying to persuade Israel of the futility of the military option for obtaining a political settlement, thus compelling an accommodation to Arab demands without war.

When Egypt and Syria initiated hostilities on October 6, however, the Soviet Union, as in 1967, followed a course of action that appears to have been primarily designed to minimize the chances of a confrontation with the United States. While Moscow resupplied its clients with weapons and publicly supported Arab political objectives, its general behavior was restrained and cautious. From the first it acted to bring about an early cessation of the fighting, and it was cooperative at the United Nations and in bilateral efforts with Washington. Its use of military means for demonstrative political purposes or deterrence was limited. Even at the declaratory level, where its practice has often been to compensate for inaction with verbal bombast, Moscow "tempered its domestic propaganda so as not to implicate the U.S. too seriously and presented the war effort as a pan-Arab (and totally local) struggle; it even moderated its official statements and warnings to Israel." <sup>163/</sup> Only when, in the final stages of the war, Egypt seemed likely to suffer a crippling military and political defeat did the Soviet Union show willingness to raise the stakes by threatening unilateral intervention. However, as in 1967 and in the Suez crisis of 1956, the Soviet move was made in circumstances that suggested a low probability that the threat would have to be carried out, and it was accompanied by signs of military readiness that were vague and inconclusive.

The Soviet Union did not shun the use of military power to influence events because such use was superfluous, costly, politically inappropriate, or operationally impractical. The remarkable restraint exhibited both in 1967 and in 1973 when the tide of events was clearly moving against its interests and overwhelming its clients and proteges was mainly the product not of Soviet self-denial but of Western deterrence. The USSR was deterred by a regional military balance that favored the United States, by its conviction that the United States was seriously committed to the defense of regional interests, and by its fear of the deleterious consequences of a military confrontation in the Middle East for a host of developing East-West political and economic relationships.

The risks for Soviet regional interests entailed in keeping such a relatively low military profile while clients went down to defeat were not appreciated by the Kremlin. Nor did the Arabs hide their disappointment or mute their reprobation. A steep decline in influence was averted after the June war by massive and immediate weapons resupply and stepped-up economic assistance, and Arab-Western relations were at such a low that Cairo and Damascus had no practical alternative to reliance on Moscow. Besides, the virtually complete destruction of Egypt's and Syria's military machines dictated quick rearmament as a preeminent national objective, and the Arabs possessed neither the money nor the political leverage to obtain non-Soviet equipment; hence the paradox, in the three years that followed the Six-Day War, of maximum Soviet

expansion of actual presence and political as well as ideological influence in the Arab world on the heels of the worst defeat suffered by Soviet arms.

In October 1973 the Soviet Union paid a heavy political price for its lukewarm support of its Arab friends. Again, the actual degree of military involvement or noninvolvement of Moscow in the war bore no perceptible relation to its political fortunes in the region during ensuing years. It is conceivable that a much more substantial Soviet interventionist role, either to protect Damascus in the first week of the war or to salvage the Egyptian position in the third week, would have produced a different result, one more favorable to the Soviet position. On the other hand, any imaginable Soviet military intervention would have been basically defensive and would not have changed the military outcome of the war; the Arabs would still have had to turn to the United States to obtain a political settlement with Israel that yielded the requisite territorial withdrawals.

In any case, the limited Soviet military involvement in 1973, though surpassing that of 1967, gained Moscow little credit with its Arab friends. Despite the wartime airlift and sealift and Moscow's apparent willingness to risk a confrontation with the United States to forestall the loss of Egypt's Third Army, the leaders of Egypt and Syria discounted and pointedly ignored the role of Soviet aid in official pronouncements made during and after the war, and Egypt moved rapidly after the cease-fire to mend its relations with Washington and orient its diplomacy exclusively toward the United States. The decline

of Soviet influence continued apace over the next three years, culminating in 1976 with Egypt's denunciation of the 1971 Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation and Syrian intervention in the Lebanese civil war against Moscow's express opposition. In Arab-Israeli conflict diplomacy, the Soviet Union found itself relegated to the sidelines, an important witness to a resurgence of American influence in Arab states.

In all likelihood, the Soviet Union has learned two critical lessons from the 1967 and 1973 events, which may importantly affect its future conduct. First, neither large-scale military assistance nor a substantial regional military presence assure much influence on the behavior of clients on issues important to them or much control over the course of events in crisis situations. Second, retention of influence over client states, even where relationships are of long standing and acquired at high cost in economic and military aid, may require a commitment to military intervention on the clients' behalf when necessary, even at the risk of nuclear confrontation.

To the extent that these lessons have been absorbed by Soviet decisionmakers, future Soviet behavior in the Middle East should reflect greater caution in the building stages of international crises (as contrasted with behavior during crises), more selectivity in the choice of clients and causes with which Moscow could become militarily associated, and increased readiness to commit military power in furtherance of preferred outcomes while supporting chosen friends.

In short, the USSR will act in ways that are both more restrained and more dangerous than in the past. With the changing balance of

military strength between the superpowers, in the Middle East as well as globally, the Soviet leadership will no doubt feel in a future confrontation that it commands the requisite capabilities for more assertive behavior than in 1967 and 1973. What the ensuing clash of wills will bring forth if the conflict is joined cannot be foreseen. Clearly, however, the choices for the two superpowers will be even harder, and the risks more terrible, than in any previous Middle Eastern crisis.

Footnotes

1. See Thomas Wolfe, "Russia's Forces Go Mobile," Interplay, March 1968; Thomas Wolfe, Soviet Power and Europe: 1945-1970 (Johns Hopkins Press, 1970); "Military Power and Soviet Policy," P-5388 (Santa Monica, Calif: Rand Corp., 1975).
2. Michael McGwire, "The Evolution of Soviet Naval Policy: 1960-1974," in Michael McGwire, Kenneth Booth, and John McDonnell, eds., Soviet Naval Policy: Objectives and Constraints (Praeger, 1975).
3. Bradford Dismukes, "The Soviet Naval General Purpose Forces: Roles and Missions in Wartime," in McGwire, Soviet Naval Policy, chap. 30; Harlan Ullman, "The Counter-Polaris Task," in McGwire and others, Soviet Naval Policy, pp. 585-97.
4. Robert G. Weinland, "Land Support for Naval Forces: Egypt and the Soviet Escadra 1962-1976," Survival (London), vol. 20 (March-April 1978).
5. See Michael McGwire and John McDonnell, eds., Soviet Naval Influence: Domestic and Foreign Dimensions (Praeger, 1977), pt. 7.
6. George Dragnich, "The Soviet Union's Quest for Access to Naval Facilities in Egypt Prior to the June War of 1967," Oles Smolansky, "Soviet Policy in the Persian Gulf," and Michael McGwire, "Foreign-Port Visits by Soviet Naval Units," all in McGwire, Booth and McDonnell, Soviet Naval Policy.
7. Dragnich, "The Soviet Union's Quest"; Mohamed Heikal, The Road to Ramadan (Collins, 1975), p. 40.
8. Dragnich, "The Soviet Union's Quest."
9. Ibid.



10. Weinland, "Land Support," p. 79.

11. Thomas Schelling, in an effort to avoid using "compulsion" (the usual noun formation for the verb "to compel"), coined the word "compellence," because the adjective is "compulsive," which "has come to carry quite a different meaning." See Thomas C. Schelling, Arms and Influence (Yale University Press, 1966), pp. 69-71.

[Editor's note].

12. Evidence of sharp leadership disagreements includes the succession crises of recent decades, the antiparty conflict of 1957, the military disaffection and ensuing "strategic debates" of the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, the remarkable behavior of the Politburo in the Czech crisis of 1968. Heikal also made caustic observations about Politburo behavior on the occasion of his visit with Nasser in Russia: "The Soviets decided that the sending of their own crews to man the SAM-3 sites in Egypt was such a critical step that it should be put before the whole Politburo. Its members were summoned from everywhere in the country and one by one they began arriving in their big black cars with the curtains drawn. For the first time in peace twelve Soviet marshals were brought in to share the deliberations of the Politburo." He also quotes Nasser, whose briefing of the Politburo was interrupted by some kind of message that began circulating among his hosts. The message turned out to be of secondary importance, and Nasser observed, "'Did you see what happened?' 'Over that bit of paper, you mean?' I asked. 'Yes,' said Nasser, 'It is too bureaucratic. If a telegram to General Siad in Somalia needs the

signature of all those three [Brezhnev, Kosygin, Podgorny] then we are in trouble.'" Heikal, Road to Ramadan, pp. 83-90.

13. Speech by Rotislav Ulyanovsky, deputy head of the International Department of the CPSU Central Committee, delivered in April 1970 at Al Ahram, Cairo, cited in Yaacov Ro'i, From Encroachment to Involvement: A Documentary Study of Soviet Policy in the Middle East, 1945-1973 (Halsted, 1974), p. 106.

14. Krasnaya Zvezda, March 14, 1970.

15. Colonel Ponomarev, Krasnaya Zvezda, February 23, 1969.

16. A Select Chronology and Background Documents Relating to the Middle East, prepared for the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, 91 Cong., 1 sess. (Government Printing Office, 1969), p. 22.

17. For a good factual account of this period, see Shiloah Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, Tel Aviv University, Middle East Record, vol. 3 (1967), particularly pp. 159-81.

18. Jerusalem Post, May 14, 1967.

19. New York Times, May 13, 1967.

20. Speech by Nureddin al-Attassi, Syrian head of State, excerpted in Institute for Palestine Studies, International Documents on Palestine, 1967 (Beirut: IPS, 1970), pp. 501-02.

21. David Morison, "The USSR and the Middle East War of 1967," in W. Raymond Duncan, ed., Soviet Policy in Developing Countries (London: Blaisdell, 1970), p. 212.

22. Walter Laqueur, The Road to Jerusalem: The Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1967 (Macmillan, 1968), pp. 73-74.
23. Avigdor Dagan, Moscow and Jerusalem: Twenty Years of Relations between Israel and the Soviet Union (London: Abelard-Schuman, 1970), pp. 202-03. This is a semiofficial account by a senior Israeli diplomat of Soviet-Israeli relations up to the 1967 crisis.
24. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, The Arms Trade with the Third World (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wicksell, 1971), p. 548; International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance: 1967-1968 (London: IISS, 1968), p. 53.
25. Resignation speech by Egyptian President Nasser, in International Documents on Palestine, 1967, pp. 596-97.
26. Dagan, Moscow and Jerusalem, pp. 203-04.
27. Ibid., pp. 205-06.
28. According to Sadat, the Soviet Union "informed me officially that Israel had massed eleven brigades along the Syrian border and had communicated this information to Jamal 'Abd an-Nasir." From Sadat's serialized memoirs on Egyptian relations with the USSR, As-Siyasah (Kuwait), November 19, 1976.
29. Nasser's resignation speech; Laqueur, Road to Jerusalem, pp. 71-72.
30. Pravda, May 19, 1967.
31. Michael Brecher, Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy (Yale University Press, 1975), p. 362.

32. Ibid., p. 372; Dagan, Moscow and Jerusalem, pp. 211-13.
33. Dagan, Moscow and Jerusalem, p. 212.
34. Ibid.
35. New York Times, June 1, 1967; Jonathan Trumbull Howe, Multicrisis: Sea Power and Global Politics in the Missile Age (MIT Press, 1971), pp. 77-79.
36. Rear Admiral J. C. Wylie, Jr., Deputy Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Naval Forces Europe, interviewed by Howe, Multicrisis, p. 76.
37. Ibid., p. 79.
38. New York Times, June 1-8, 1967, especially dispatches by Neil Sheehan; Anthony R. Wells, "The 1967 June War: Soviet Naval Diplomacy and the Sixth Fleet--A Reappraisal," (Arlington, Va.: Center for Naval Analyses, 1977).
39. Howe, Multicrisis, pp. 76-77. A typical item is the column by Victor Mayevsky, "An Alliance of Colonialists?" in Pravda, June 4, 1967, included in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, (CDSP) (June 21, 1967), p. 26.
40. See the authoritative account in William B. Quandt, Decade of Decisions: American Diplomacy Toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1967-1976 (University of California Press, 1977), chap. 2; and Brecher, Decisions, pp. 412-17.
41. Brecher, Decisions, pp. 419, 421.
42. Ibid., p. 395.
43. Foreign Minister Abba Eban, in ibid., p. 379.

44. International Documents on Palestine, p. 559.
45. Anwar el-Sadat, In Search of Identity: An Autobiography (Harper and Row, 1977), p. 173.
46. International Documents on Palestine, p. 565.
47. Ibid., p. 12; CDSP (June 14, 1967), p. 2.
48. Mohamed Heikal, The Cairo Documents (Doubleday, 1973), p. 244.
49. Ibid., p. 242; Sadat, In Search of Identity, p. 173.
50. For the official Syrian statement on the visit and cables from Attassi to Brezhnev and Kosygin, see Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), Daily Report, May 31, 1967.
51. Dagan, Moscow and Jerusalem, pp. 216-17.
52. Lyndon Baines Johnson, The Vantage Point: Perspectives of the Presidency, 1963-1969 (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), p. 291; Quandt, Decade of Decisions, pp. 42-43, 49.
53. Brecher, Decisions, pp. 339-340; Quandt, Decade of Decisions, pp. 54-55.
54. Wylie interview, in Howe, Multicrisis, p. 117; Wells, "1967 June War," p. 14.
55. Johnson, Vantage Point, pp. 298-301.
56. Neil Sheehan, "Russians Continue to Harass 6th Fleet," New York Times, June 9, 1967.
57. Ibid.
58. Texts in International Documents on Palestine, pp. 249-50.

59. Broadcast by Radio Damascus in Arabic, 11:46 GMT, June 10, 1967; FBIS, Daily Report, June 12, 1967.
60. Johnson, Vantage Point, p. 302.
61. Text in Dagan, Moscow and Jerusalem, p. 236.
62. Text in CDSP (June 28, 1967), pp. 3-4.
63. Michel Bar-Zohar, Histoire secrete de la guerre d'Israel (Paris: Fayard, 1968), p. 306. Wells, "1967 June War," p. 22, on the other hand, asserts that "as far as is known, the Soviets never placed any of their airborne forces on alert."
64. According to Quandt, Decade of Decisions, p. 63, Johnson's account of the Soviet-U.S. exchanges on October 10 has been judged "overly dramatic" by other participants. There is no mention in the President's account of any threatening activities by Moscow.
65. According to one authoritative Israeli account, "Secretary of State Dean Rusk got in touch with our foreign minister, Abba Eban, and our ambassador in Washington and asked them in near panic where we thought we were heading. He warned that our situation in the Security Council was getting worse, and he demanded that we obey the Council's ceasefire decision forthwith." Moshe Dayan, Moshe Dayan: A Story of My Life (Morrow, 1976), p. 377.
66. Nasser is reported to have told close associates just before he accepted the unconditional cease-fire on June 8 that the Russians "had been frozen into immobility by their fear of a confrontation with America,"

and that no military supplies had been forthcoming in the course of the fighting because "they had been too scared of getting involved with the American Sixth Fleet." He added that a Soviet supply ship loaded with several thousand guns had turned back within sight of Alexandria for fear of Israeli bombings. Anthony Nutting, Nasser (Constable, 1972), p. 419.

67. Heikal, Road to Ramadan, pp. 46-48; Alvin Z. Rubinstein, Red Star on the Nile: The Soviet-Egyptian Influence Relationship Since the June War (Princeton University Press, 1977).

68. New York Times, June 8, 1967.

69. Ibid., June 9, 1967.

70. Howe, Multicrisis, p. 95.

71. Johnson, Vantage Point, p. 302.

72. Ibid., pp. 300-01.

73. According to the Yugoslav newspaper Bo'rsa, quoting "well-informed circles," Podgorny told Nasser during his visit to Cairo in late June 1967: "There is no other way of liquidating the territorial gains of the aggressor except negotiations and even some crucial concessions with respect to navigation and the recognition of the fact of the existence of the Israeli state in the Middle East." Quoted in Rubinstein, Red Star on the Nile, p. 18.

74. Quandt, Decade of Decisions, p. 68.

75. Heikal, Road to Ramadan, p. 67. Heikal's book and Sadat's autobiography In Search of Identity, particularly chapter 8, contain sundry details on the difficulties in Soviet-Egyptian arms relations.
76. New York Times, June 19, 1967.
77. The continuous presence of Soviet units in Port Said and Alexandria lasted for eight and a half years, until their final expulsion in April 1976 following Sadat's breach with the Soviet Union. Bradford Dismukes, "Soviet Employment of Naval Power for Political Purposes, 1967-75," in McGwire and McDonnell, Soviet Naval Influence, p. 485.
78. Robert G. Weinland, "Superpower Naval Diplomacy in the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War" (Center for Naval Analyses, 1978), pp. 43, 46, 47.
79. Ibid., pp. 46, 47.
80. Dismukes, "Soviet Employment of Naval Power," p. 502.
81. Jon D. Glassman, Arms for the Arabs (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), p. 113. The SCUDs were manned by Soviet crews but appear to have been under Egyptian operational control in the October war.
82. See Galia Golan, Yom Kippur and After: The Soviet Union and the Middle East Crisis (London: Cambridge University Press, 1977), pp. 37-71, for a good treatment of Soviet policy in 1972-73.
83. October 1, according to Heikal, Road to Ramadan, p. 24; October 3 in Sadat's version, In Search of Identity, p. 246.
84. Weinland, "Superpower Naval Diplomacy," pp. 48-50; Times (London), October 12, 1973.



85. Heikal, Road to Ramadan, p. 34.
86. Sadat, In Search of Identity, p. 247.
87. Heikal, Road to Ramadan, p. 35.
88. Quandt, Decade of Decisions, p. 162.
89. Kissinger's sentiments, expressed at the first meeting of the Washington Special Action Group after the war began; in *ibid.*, pp. 172-73.
90. Quandt, Decade of Decisions, p. 171.
91. Weinland, "Superpower Naval Diplomacy," p. 32.
92. The Soviet Union repeated its request the evening of October 7 and, according to Sadat, practically every day thereafter. In Search of Identity, pp. 253-54.
93. Quandt, Decade of Decisions, pp. 173-75; Golan, Yom Kippur, p. 75.
94. "SovMedFlt was in a normal peacetime disposition during the first phase of the crisis (from the start of the war to October 12)." From a report on operations of the U.S. Sixth Fleet during the October war written by the fleet commander, Vice Admiral Daniel Murphy, and quoted at length in Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., On Watch (New York, 1976), p. 437.
95. Heikal, Road to Ramadan, pp. 212, 220, quoting Sadat.
96. Heikal, Road to Ramadan, p. 218.
97. Golan, Yom Kippur, p. 81.
98. See Heikal, Road to Ramadan, pp. 207-17, for an account of repeated Sadat-Vinogradov discussions about a cease-fire.
99. For an analysis, see Golan, Yom Kippur, pp. 85-86.

100. For details of the airlift and sealift from an authoritative source, see William B. Quandt, Soviet Policy in the October 1973 War (Rand Corp., 1976).
101. Golan, Yom Kippur, p. 86.
102. Department of State Bulletin (October 29, 1973), pp. 529, 535, 538.
103. Quandt, Soviet Policy, p. 20.
104. Ibid., pp. 21-26.
105. Ibid., p. 23.
106. Ibid., p. 22.
107. Golan, Yom Kippur, p. 94.
108. Tass, October 12, 1973.
109. Weinland, "Superpower Naval Diplomacy," p. 52; Glassman, Arms for the Arabs, p. 134. The latter mentions that a Kotlin-class destroyer was positioned off Latakia harbor and provided antisubmarine protection for Soviet ships loaded with war supplies.
110. Glassman, Arms for the Arabs, p. 134.
111. Ibid.
112. Chaim Herzog, The War of Atonement (Little, Brown, 1975), pp. 136-37.
113. As Weinland aptly points out, "these two undertakings in support of the resupply of Syria--providing combatant protection at the terminus, and employing amphibious lift ships to insure that critical materials could be unloaded--represented significant departures from past Soviet practice. Prior to this, Soviet naval forces had rarely been employed for

positive ends--to accomplish something. Most of their activity had been oriented toward the negative objectives of deterrence and defense--insuring that things don't occur." "Superpower Naval Diplomacy," pp. 54-55.

114. Marvin Kalb and Bernard Kalb, Kissinger (Boston, 1974), p. 476.
115. Golan, Yom Kippur, p. 93. See also New York Times, October 11, 1973.
116. Golan, Yom Kippur, p. 101.
117. Ibid., p. 100.
118. Sadat, In Search of Identity, p. 264.
119. Quandt, Decade of Decisions, p. 184.
120. Le Monde, October 17, 1973, and April 26, 1974; New York Times, October 17, 1973; John C. Campbell, "Soviet Strategy in the Balkans," Problems of Communism, vol. 23 (July-August 1974), pp. 6-7.
121. Quandt, Decade of Decisions, p. 179.
122. According to the Kalbs, Kissinger chose not to inform the Israelis of the alert, which only became known to Israeli intelligence thirty-six hours later, on the afternoon of October 12. Kissinger, pp. 470-71, 472.
123. Weinland, "Superpower Naval Diplomacy," pp. 51, 47 (table 3).
124. From Vice Admiral Murphy's report, in Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 437.
125. Weinland, "Superpower Naval Diplomacy," p. 55.
126. Interview in U.S. News and World Report (December 24, 1973), pp. 27-28.

127. Weinland, "Superpower Naval Diplomacy," p. 47 (table 3).
123. Kalb and Kalb, Kissinger, p. 486; Golan, Yom Kippur, pp. 118-19.
129. Herzog, War of Atonement, p. 248.
130. Ibid., p. 250.
131. Heikal, Road to Ramadan, p. 251.
132. Insight Team of the Sunday Times, Insight on the Middle East War (London: Angus, 1974), p. 204.
133. Quandt, Decade of Decisions, p. 196; Kalb and Kalb, Kissinger, p. 490; New York Times, April 10, 1974.
134. "I would like to state on behalf of the President the United States position on this latter very clearly. The United States does not favor and will not approve the sending of a joint Soviet-United States force into the Middle East.... The United States is even more opposed to the unilateral introduction by any great power, especially by any nuclear power, of military forces into the Middle East in whatever guise those forces should be introduced." "Secretary Kissinger's News Conference of October 25," Department of State Bulletin (November 12, 1973), p. 587.
135. Quandt, Decade of Decisions, p. 197.
136. Ibid., p. 198.
137. The Soviet Union sent seventy observers, the United States thirty-five.
138. Department of State Bulletin (November 13, 1973), p. 590.
139. Insight on the Middle East War, pp. 204, 213.

140. Ibid., p. 204.
141. Quandt, Decade of Decisions, pp. 191-92.
142. Secretary of Defense Schlesinger's News Conference of October 26," Department of State Bulletin (November 19, 1973), p. 622. Schlesinger generally downplayed the probability of Soviet intervention, spoke of "mixed reactions and different assessments" among National Security Council members about Soviet behavior immediately before the alert decision, and referred to the need to counter the possible effects of Watergate on others' perception of the American will to act as an important component of the U.S. response. These were remarkably candid statements, considering he was speaking while the alert was in effect, and on the day that President Nixon had labeled the situation as "the most difficult crisis we have had since the Cuban confrontation of 1962," a crisis caused by the belief that "the Soviet Union was planning to send a very substantial force into the Mideast, a military force." Ibid., pp. 581, 583.
143. Weinland, "Superpower Naval Diplomacy," p. 39.
144. Ibid., p. 47; Zumwalt, On Watch, pp. 439, 447.
145. From Admiral Murphy's report, in Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 447.
146. Ibid.
147. Weinland, "Superpower Naval Diplomacy," p. 38.
148. U.S. News and World Report, December 24, 1973.
149. Weinland, "Superpower and Naval Diplomacy," p. 57.

150. Ibid., pp. 52-54.
151. Golan, Yom Kippur, p. 123; Glassman, Arms for the Arabs, pp. 162-63.
152. Weinland, "Superpower Naval Diplomacy," p. 54.
153. Kalb and Kalb, Kissinger, p. 493; Glassman, Arms for the Arabs, p. 163; Washington Post, November 21 and 22, 1973; Aviation Week and Space Technology, November 5, 1973. For U.S. official assessment, see Kissinger's news conference of November 21, 1973. Quandt who at the time was in the Middle East section of the National Security Council and attended Washington Special Action Group (WSAG) meetings, categorically states that "it is virtually certain that the Soviets did not turn over the control of nuclear warheads for SCUD missiles to the Egyptians," and "there is no reliable information that nuclear weapons of any sort have ever been introduced into Egypt by the Soviets." Soviet Policy, p. 31.
154. Weinland, "Superpower Naval Diplomacy," p. 58.
155. Golan, Yom Kippur, p. 87. Though the Soviet Union allowed the SCUDs to be fired at Israeli troops in the front, it did not agree to Sadat's request that the missiles be used against the landing of American supplies in the Sinai.
156. Sadat, In Search of Identity, p. 265.
157. BBC Monitoring Service, Summary of World Broadcasts, ME/4426/A/16.
158. "Secretary of Defense Schlesinger's News Conference of October 26," p. 617.

159. Quandt, Decade of Decisions, p. 197.

160. "Secretary of Defense Schlesinger's News Conference of October 26."

161. Ibid.; Kalb and Kalb, Kissinger, p. 488; Glassman, Arms for the Arabs, p. 161. There is an important discrepancy between the defense secretary's statement that the airlift decreased on the 22d, and ceased completely on the 23d, and Quandt's study, which shows that some 550 tons were delivered to Syria, Egypt, and Iraq on the 23d, with no deliveries on the 24th; Soviet Policy, pp. 25-26. If Schlesinger was correct and there were no Antonov flights on the 23d, the spotting of ten or twelve transports heading for Egypt on the 24th could have given rise to the fear that they carried the advance party of a Soviet intervention force. If Quandt's figures are correct and the airlift continued through the 23d, prima facie the flights on the 24th were part of the continuing supply effort. The planes, upon landing in Egypt on the 25th, were reportedly found to be carrying not troops (Glassman, Arms for the Arabs, p. 161), and Schlesinger himself stated that WSAG members considered "the probability of Soviet forces being en route...to be quite low."

162. Quandt, Soviet Policy, p. 23.

163. Golan, Yom Kippur, p. 126.

## Chapter 11

### AIR SUPPORT IN THE ARAB EAST

by Alvin Z. Rubinstein

Developments in the Middle East often take on a dynamic of their own and sweep superpowers along on a course they had neither anticipated nor desired. From 1955 to the early 1970s Arab needs and Soviet interests and capabilities led from Soviet arms transfers and verbal support in crises to deployments in defense of vulnerable clients. Soviet involvement in the Arab East began in the early post-Stalin period as part of a foreign policy shift from a continental-based strategy to a global one. Entry into the Middle East followed easily upon Moscow's willingness to sell arms. Initially motivated by a desire to undermine the Western-sponsored Baghdad Pact and the network of bases available to the U.S. Sixth Fleet and Strategic Air Command for use against the Soviet Union, arms transfers paved the way for the establishment of a presence and expanded ties. Eventually, though, Moscow's clients sought much more than this.

Moscow was shocked by the Arab collapse in the 1967 June War. So rapid was the Israeli advance that there was nothing the Soviet Union could do to prevent the outcome, even had it been inclined--which it was not--to intervene militarily on the Arab side. On the diplomatic front the USSR mounted a major campaign in the United Nations on behalf



of the Arabs, promised "all necessary material assistance," and broke off relations with Israel. Militarily, it limited itself to closely watching the Sixth Fleet aircraft carriers. The Kremlin acted quickly once the fighting was over, however. On June 12, 1967, two days after the UN cease-fire had gone into effect, the Soviet government sent a squadron of TU-16 bombers to Egypt to show the flag and bolster Egyptian morale; and a massive airlift of military equipment began, including the delivery of "200 crated fighters" within several weeks. <sup>1/</sup> By October, it had sent an additional 100 MIG-21s, 50 MIG-19s, 50 to 60 SU-7s, and 20 IL-28s; and by the end of 1967, 80 percent of the aircraft, tanks, and artillery that Egypt had lost in June had been replaced. <sup>2/</sup>

In the Soviet leadership there were undoubtedly differences over what course to follow, though the evidence of the intraparty debate on foreign policy is meager. One indication was the dismissal of Nikolai G. Yegorychev, first secretary of the Moscow City Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), a week after the CPSU Central Committee Plenum of June 21. Since November 1962 Yegorychev had held this post, to which he had been promoted, presumably by Khrushchev, shortly after the Cuban missile crisis. Yegorychev led a party delegation to Egypt (April 11-24, 1967) after Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko's sudden visit in late March, and perhaps was implicated in Nasser's decision to precipitate the crisis with Israel in May, supposedly to forestall a preemptive Israeli attack against Syria. Yegorychev may have been critical of the Politburo's

handling of the June War, thus placing him at odds with the Brezhnev faction and exacerbating a rivalry born of disagreements over how to implement economic reforms and how to treat the liberal intelligentsia. <sup>3/</sup>

Whatever the divisions in the Politburo, Soviet leaders decided to reprovevision the Arabs. This entailed a major commitment of military advisers to ensure the effective use of the modern weapons provided and to create a system of defense against further attacks. In early November 1967 Marshal Matvei V. Zakharov, chief of the Soviet general staff, who had personally supervised the strengthening of Egypt's defenses, reported to Nasser that "Egypt can now stand up to anything Israel can deliver." <sup>4/</sup> Soviet advisers began to train the Egyptian and Syrian armed forces at all levels. The military vulnerability and dependence of Egypt and Syria made the Soviet presence and position seem secure. Both states needed Soviet arms, expertise, and tactical guidance to redress Israeli superiority. Soon other Arab states--Sudan, Iraq, and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY)--overcame their hesitation to place heavy reliance on Soviet military assistance and followed suit.

Moscow quickly realized strategic dividends by obtaining sought-after naval facilities in Egypt. To allay U.S. uneasiness as its military buildup of Egypt unfolded, it regularly proclaimed the defensive nature of its assistance, whose stated aim was to secure justice for the Arabs and a return of their territories. The Soviet naval presence not only deterred Israeli attacks on Egyptian ports but also warned Washington that it no longer had an unlimited range of options for intervention in the region.

There were other reasons for the massive infusion of arms and the Soviet military buildup in the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean. First, it was essential for the Soviet Union's future in the area to maintain in power regimes that pursued policies congenial to its interests. Whatever their past differences with Nasser, Soviet leaders perceived that a set of convergent goals now bound Egypt and Syria to the USSR, and vice versa. The strategic stakes made the cost of arms and advice seem moderate, the risk tolerable. Coming to the aid of "progressive" regimes in the Middle East could also have a ripple effect of long-range significance.

Second, having embarked on a policy of acquiring influence in the Arab world, Moscow pressed its diplomacy on a broad front. The Arab-Israeli conflict was by no means the only promising pond to fish in, though it was the largest; the prospects were bright elsewhere in the Middle East. In the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea-Horn of Africa littoral, and North Africa, Moscow saw situations that could weaken its global adversary and improve its own position. Third, Moscow purveyed arms to restore its tarnished credibility as a superpower patron, with an eye to impressing fence-sitters and prospective suppliants as well as its heavily dependent clients.

Soon however, the Kremlin received Arab requests not only for armaments, military advisers, and supportive naval deployments, but also for combat support on the battlefield. Egypt at the end of 1969 was desperate for assistance against deep-penetration raids by Israeli aircraft; at the same time, Sudan sought support for its counterinsurgency effort against the Anyanya rebellion; and in 1974 Iraq called on Moscow for help in suppressing the Kurds. To each of these requests the Kremlin responded

affirmatively by providing combat air support. These Soviet military actions and related diplomacy are the subjects of this examination.

### The Air Defense of Egypt

As early as 1955 Egypt was the focal point of Moscow's strategy for exercising influence in the Arab world. Differences cropping up from time to time between Moscow and Cairo were never permitted to jeopardize the Soviet leadership's courtship of Nasser.

To Egypt's crushing defeat in June 1967 the Soviet Union's response was immediate, generous, and far-reaching: it undertook to restore Egypt's military capability and assist in the struggle against "the aggression," as Israel's victory was called. Some 2,000 Soviet advisers, including about 800 attached to the air force, arrived to help in the retraining. They counseled extensive reforms in the Egyptian military, especially in the air force, the bastion of social privilege, and Nasser did introduce many reforms; the Kremlin was less successful in persuading him to undertake meaningful economic and social reforms.

Egypt's military recovery was rapid, leading to differences over how to deal with Israel. Basically, Moscow wanted to keep the Arab-Israeli front quiet, but Nasser was otherwise inclined. In the first year after the June debacle, he had accepted the possibility of a political solution; lacking military capability, he had no option other than to talk about a political solution. Also he hoped the United States would, as in 1957,

force Israel to surrender captured Arab territory; and he believed world public opinion would see the justness of the Arab cause. <sup>5/</sup> However, with the failure of political means to effect a solution, his desire for an alternative to stalemate led him to consider the military option. So in the fall of 1968 he began a series of minor military engagements in the Suez Canal area. Artillery barrages and air attacks along the canal paralleled intensified diplomatic activity at the United Nations.

Also impelling Nasser's military activity were domestic restiveness and growing criticism of his leadership in the Arab world. From early March to late June 1969, Egyptian activity along the canal increased as Nasser launched the "war of attrition"--his interim answer to unacceptable stalemate. Soviet leaders, confronted with a serious situation in the Far East, where clashes with the Chinese along the Ussuri River threatened to explode into war, sought to contain the Suez brushfire. They tried to dissuade Nasser from his collision course with Israel, but failed, despite his total military dependence on the Soviet Union.

By summer the war of attrition had escalated to a major conflict. Slowly but steadily Nasser's military option turned sour. From early September, when Israeli forces landed along the Egyptian coast south of Suez and ranged over a thirty-mile strip destroying missile batteries and manned outposts, to late December, when Israeli planes began to fly virtually unchallenged over Egypt's now exposed heartland, Nasser's predicament deepened. The Soviet-Egyptian joint communique, issued in Moscow on December 12, 1969, suggested that Vice-President Anwar Sadat's mission to obtain additional Soviet arms had been successful, that the Soviet leadership had promised to

send increased quantities of weapons and advisers. However, between December 12, 1969, and January 22, 1970--the day Nasser flew in secret to Moscow to urge an expanded military involvement--Egypt's plight and Nasser's own situation worsened. Israeli planes dominated the skies over Egypt, and Soviet combat troops were needed to save Nasser's regime. The Soviet response set in motion a chain of momentous developments.

#### The Kremlin Acts to Save a Client

Soviet leaders knew of Egypt's dire situation in the fall of 1969 from their subordinates on the scene, so Nasser's appeal in January 1970 came as no surprise and found the Politburo favorably disposed and ready to act. First, Nasser's political survival, which was in jeopardy, had to be assured. Moscow was not about to abandon the man who had brought the Soviet Union into the mainstream of the Arab world; he was a known factor with whom it could work, and his policies were for the most part congenial to Soviet long-term interests. Second, Nasser agreed to Soviet conditions and provided unrestricted use of sections of six major airfields from which Soviet planes could reconnoiter the eastern Mediterranean and the Red Sea to the Horn of Africa; unhindered access to the Egyptian ports of Alexandria, Port Said, and Sallum; and freedom to deploy Soviet ground air defense personnel and combat pilots. This enormously improved not only the Soviet military position in Egypt, but also its strategic position in the eastern Mediterranean. Third, the defense of Nasser was linked to Soviet credibility in the Arab world. To permit a U.S.-supported client to defeat Moscow's most important one would mean, in effect, acknowledging by default

U.S. preeminence in the area and running the risk of finding itself without any role there at all. Finally, those who had favored the "forward policy" in the Arab world--notably Brezhnev and his closest associates--could not shy away from the consequences of that policy without laying themselves open to attack on their original decision from opponents in the Politburo and the Central Committee. A careful reading of Soviet writings at the time suggests that the decision to commit forces, if needed was made sometime in the late summer or early fall of 1969; left open, pending political-military developments in Egypt, were the timing and type of forces required. <sup>6/</sup>

In contrast to June 1967, when Podgorny's request for exclusive control over the areas quartering Soviet advisers was rebuffed by Nasser, <sup>7/</sup> the Soviet Union in 1970 was given a blank check for the deployment and defense of its personnel. The general arrangements for the Soviet troops were settled before Nasser returned to Cairo:

we were told the number of SAM-3 batteries they were going to give us and the positions in which they would be placed, and the number of men who would come with them. Eighty Soviet aircraft were going to be sent, preceded by four high-altitude supersonic reconnaissance planes--X500s the Russians called, them, though the West now knows them as MIG-25s. About 1800 Egyptians were to come to the Soviet Union for six months' training [to learn to operate the SAM-3s.] <sup>8/</sup>

According to Mohamed Heikal, the editor of the semiofficial newspaper Al Ahram, who was a close confidant of Nasser's and had accompanied him to Moscow, the Russians made their decision at the meeting attended by the members of the Politburo and all twelve Soviet marshals. <sup>9/</sup> However, the precision with which they laid out their plan of action hardly suggests the spur-of-the-moment decision that Heikal reports. Rather, it supports the view that Soviet leaders had anticipated the contingency of a massive intervention to save Nasser, prepared accordingly, and were ready with their reply when Nasser made his request. Brezhnev asked that the results of their discussions be kept secret as long as possible.

Soviet operational objectives called, first, for bringing an end to Israeli deep-penetration raids over Cairo, Port Said, and other cities; second, for pushing the fighting back to the canal area; and third, for restoring an approximate balance of power between the Egyptians and the Israelis. The Soviet plan involved the assumption of responsibility for Egypt's air defense. For the first time, Soviet combat troops in significant numbers were to be sent to fight in a non-Communist third world country. Soviet capabilities and confidence had reached the point where Moscow was willing to go beyond the supply of weapons and advisers to support its clients and pursue political-military objectives in the third world.

Soviet missile crews, estimated at about 1,500 air defense personnel, arrived in early March and began installing SAM-3 sites around Cairo, Alexandria, and in the Nile Valley. <sup>10/</sup> In addition to SAM-3s, a missile designed specifically to counter low-flying aircraft and effective up to fifteen miles, "the first Soviet-piloted MIG-21J interceptors (a more advanced version of the MIG-21)



and accompanying ground support crews began arriving" soon afterward at Egyptian air bases. <sup>11/</sup> Soviet aircraft operated out of six airfields (El Mansura, Inchas, Cairo West, Jiyanklis, Beni Suef, and Aswan; by 1971-72 small numbers of IL-38 patrol craft and AN-12 electronic surveillance planes were also operating from an airfield at Mersa Matruh). Supplementing these formidable defensive measures were thickened SAM-2 sites (SAM-2s are partially effective at high altitudes but quite ineffective below 2,000 feet) and large numbers of radar-controlled ZSU-23-4 four-barreled 23mm antiaircraft guns designed for use against low-flying aircraft. By the end of March, about 4,000 Soviet military personnel were manning missile sites alone; by the end of June, the number had risen to some 8,000; and by the end of 1970, it was up to almost 15,000. <sup>12/</sup> If the estimated 3,000 to 4,000 Soviet instructors and advisers attached to the Egyptian armed forces and the 150 to 200 Soviet pilots flying MIG-21Js are included, Soviet armed forces in Egypt at the end of 1970 numbered about 20,000. The first Soviet-manned SAM-3 sites became operational on March 15, 1970, leading Israel Minister of Defense Moshe Dayan to observe several days later that where SAM-3s were stationed and successfully operated "things would become difficult for us." <sup>13/</sup> At the beginning of April Soviet soldiers dressed in Egyptian army fatigues with no insignia or marks of rank were observed in various parts of Egypt. <sup>14/</sup> Moscow was no longer keeping its commitment secret. The growing number of SAM sites and the reports that Soviet pilots were flying in defense of Cairo and Alexandria prompted Dayan to announce the end of Israeli deep-penetration raids on April 6. The first confirmation of the use of Soviet pilots came on April 17, "when Israeli pilots overhearing exchanges in Russian in a MIG-21J formation, returned to base rather than challenge the adversary." <sup>15/</sup> After

April 18 Israeli pilots did not venture beyond the Suez Canal region, to avoid encountering Russian-speaking pilots who scrambled into attack formation to meet every potential approach to the Nile Valley by Israeli aircraft. <sup>16/</sup> The presence of Soviet combat forces made the Egyptian heartland and, with it, Nasser's position once again secure.

In May and June Soviet-manned SAM units buttressed the Suez Canal air defenses. Not only did the introduction of the new SAM-3 installations and the improved SAM-2 models make Israeli attacks more costly, but the Soviet-piloted MIG-21Js, "which, during their first weeks in Egypt, had restricted their patrols to the Nile Valley, extended their operations forward to areas on the flanks of the Canal front." <sup>17/</sup> Having denied Israeli aircraft access to central and upper Egypt, Moscow then moved its forces forward to the fiercely waged struggle in the canal area. Despite heavy Israeli bombing and mounting Egyptian casualties, the Russians and Egyptians continually pushed the network of SAM sites closer and closer to the canal.

The Soviet-Egyptian success in reestablishing the SAM defenses was achieved by setting up the SAM sites often overnight with minimum consideration for reducing vulnerability and making fine adjustments for accuracy. By this technique, Israeli raiders were frequently surprised by new SAM installations. Moreover, new weapons were introduced, such as the SAM-3 and improved models of the SAM-2. The new SAM-2s possessed better computer fire control and a capability of launching salvos of six rockets in an integrated time sequence. This technique of so-called ripple firing was, of course, extremely expensive, but it did compensate for accuracy losses because of speedy installation, and it also better assured the imposition of high Israeli losses, which was the goal of the Soviet campaign. <sup>18/</sup>

The nearer Soviet crews and pilots drew to the incendiary canal area, the more ominous became the potential for a Soviet-Israeli crisis.

In early July, this took on new meaning when Israeli Chief of Staff Major General Haim Bar-Lev announced that three Israeli planes had been shot down by SAM-2 missile batteries, whose crews included Soviet personnel.<sup>19/</sup> Israeli air losses continued to rise.

However, on Secretary of State William Rogers' initiative and because of Nasser's readiness for a respite to strengthen his military-political situation and give U.S. diplomacy a chance, a cease-fire was put into effect on the evening of August 7, 1970. At that time, there were an estimated fifteen to twenty SAM sites within the fifty-kilometer zone on either side of the canal into which no further military installations were supposed to be introduced; two months later, "between 40 and 50 missile batteries--about one-third of them SAM-3s--had been set up by the Egyptian army within the 50 km stand-still zone. Of these, 30 to 40 were within 30 kms of the Canal, and the closest battery was about 12 kms from the waterway. Taking reserves into account, some 500 to 600 missiles were newly emplaced within the stand-still zone."<sup>20/</sup> The Soviet-Egyptian violation of the cease-fire "was apparently a calculated move to definitively eliminate Israel's air supremacy over the canal," the Russians probably reasoning that this "would best guarantee the maintenance of the cease-fire and, by increasing the insecurity of Israel's hold on the east bank of the Canal, would provide incentive for an Israeli pullback."<sup>21/</sup> Also, the Soviet air defense system in the Nile Valley made Cairo, Alexandria, and Aswan among the best protected centers in the world.

Throughout the crisis of January to July 1970, Soviet leaders always spoke in broad terms, stressing the defensive nature of their military involvement. A few days after Nasser's secret visit to Moscow, Pravda addressed itself to the "inflamed" situation in the Middle East. Those in the West who expected that the Arabs would find "themselves all alone" and easy prey of the Israelis were given notice of the reaffirmation of the strong ties between the Soviet Union and Egypt and the even greater significance "at the present time" of the "many-faceted Arab-Soviet co-operation." <sup>22/</sup> The article noted Egypt's increasing "combat potential" and the USSR's resolve not to abandon Egypt. On January 31 Premier Aleksei Kosygin sent a letter to President Nixon warning of the dangerous situation developing in the Middle East and demanding an end to Israeli air attacks. In the letter, which was the first known direct message sent by Kosygin to Nixon since the President had taken office a year earlier, the Soviet leader was quite direct:

We would like to tell you in all frankness that if Israel continues its adventurism, to bomb the territory of the U.A.R. and other Arab states, the Soviet Union will be forced to see to it that the Arab states have the means at their disposal with the help of which due rebuff to the arrogant aggressor can be made. <sup>23/</sup>

On February 2 he communicated with British Prime Minister Harold Wilson and French President Georges Pompidou as well. Unsatisfactory replies led Tass to report on February 12 that Kosygin had told the Western powers:

"The Soviet Union is fully resolved to help foil imperialist ventures and there should be no doubt about that."<sup>24/</sup> Four days later, Tass announced that the Soviet Union would provide the Arab states with "the necessary support" to uphold their security and their just interests.<sup>25/</sup> The SAM-3 crews and Soviet-piloted aircraft were dispatched with background music of anti-Zionist denunciations in the Soviet media.

Moscow's combat intervention was undoubtedly made easier by the attitude of many officials in Washington that "Israel has brought on the Soviet response by a reckless bombing campaign and irresponsible rhetoric aimed at the Nasser regime's existence."<sup>26/</sup> Moreover, when Washington did not object to the dispatch of Soviet arms and personnel, apparently because "the United States received advance assurance that the introduction of Soviet fighting personnel into Egypt . . . was essential for the defense of a hard-pressed protege," Moscow may have felt assured that no confrontation would ensue.<sup>27/</sup>

On April 14 Brezhnev optimistically observed that the progressive Arab regimes had not only stood their ground but strengthened their position and that at the same time Israel's international isolation was growing. A peaceful solution, he said, was possible provided Israel withdrew from occupied Arab territories; the Arabs would never accept the occupation of their lands, and the USSR was ready to give "all the necessary assistance" to help achieve a settlement.<sup>28/</sup> By late April Soviet policy had achieved the end of Israeli deep-penetration raids and the security of the Nile Valley, a critical tactical objective. However, what Soviet statements never dealt with was how far the USSR was prepared to go to alter the situation: was it

only to effect a return to the status quo before the war of attrition, or was Moscow willing to help Egypt cross the canal?

Israeli reports about the expanding combat role of Soviet pilots prompted Premier Kosygin to hold a press conference at which he confirmed the Soviet military involvement, justifying it as being in conformance with Egyptian wishes and in opposition to what he termed U.S.-supported Israeli aggression. <sup>29/</sup> Two weeks later, in an apparent effort to persuade the United States not to provide Israel with additional aircraft, he divulged his reply to a message sent him on May 7 by the heads of state of Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan. In his answer Kosygin emphasized the Soviet Union's interest in a political settlement in the Middle East in compliance with all the provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 242 of November 22, 1967, saying Moscow's "extensive aid" was designed to help the Arab states "successfully defend their legitimate national rights." <sup>30/</sup> While heavy fighting continued, so did uncertainty about Soviet intentions, particularly as the battle shifted toward the canal. On the whole, Moscow's statements sought to convey the "defensive" character of its involvement, both to reassure the United States about its objectives and to keep Washington's resupply of Israel to a minimum.

On the battlefield Soviet air defense forces were crucial: they created new political facts that motivated the Rogers initiative of June 1970 and Nasser's acceptance on July 22 of a cease-fire effective on August 7. The cease-fire ended the dangerously escalating Soviet-Israeli confrontations. From June 30, when Soviet-manned SAMs downed two Israeli F-4s over the canal, to July 30, when the Israelis ambushed scrambling Soviet planes as they

climbed to intercept the approaching F-4s and downed four MIG-21Js, the two engaged in an increasingly serious series of feints and countermoves. <sup>31/</sup>

Having accepted responsibility for the defense of Egypt and considering its prestige on the line, Moscow was not prepared to settle for a situation "that risked a compromise or defeat of Soviet arms by Israel." <sup>32/</sup> When Moscow observed that Israel would not shy away from confrontation with the USSR if its security was at stake, it decided to expand the air defense belt along the canal, even though this required violation of the August 7 cease-fire. To induce greater prudence in the Israelis and to convey to Washington its determination to defend Egypt, Moscow decided to construct "a virtually impregnable air defense wall," <sup>33/</sup> comparable to that of the most heavily defended areas in the Soviet Union.

After the cease-fire of August 7, 1970, and until June 1972, the Soviet Union continued to expand Egypt's military capability. The improvement in Egypt's Soviet-operated air defense system was immediately evident:

By the end of October [1970], some 500-600 surface-to-air missile launchers covered the western approaches to the Canal, about 200 of them being within 19 miles of that line. Moreover, the forward sites in the system, carefully spaced 7½ miles apart along the Canal itself in order to give overlapping coverage, also covered an area extending 12 miles into Israel-occupied territory. <sup>34/</sup>

To the thickened interlocking network of SAM-2s and SAM-3s, the Soviet Union introduced some SAM-4s (medium-altitude air defense weapons designed to provide combat troops with umbrella protection against air strikes) and, in 1971, SAM-6s (the tracked version of the SAM-3, especially useful against low-flying aircraft). <sup>35/</sup> In 1970-72 it also expanded Egypt's air force, increasing the number of Cairo's MIG-21C/Ds "from about 150 in July 1970 to 220 two years later, and of SU-7s from 105 to 120":

On the other hand, the operation of the MIG-21Js [about 150 of them] was never handed over to Egyptian pilots or ground crews. Moreover in 1971, a token number, perhaps as many as a half-dozen, of the new but still not fully tested MIG-23s were deployed in Egypt for reconnaissance experiments, and a squadron or possibly two of SU-11 fighter-bombers wholly for display. Only Soviet personnel were allowed to handle the two classes of aircraft . . .

The helicopter fleet, nearly trebled in size from 70 in 1970 to 180 in 1972, included an additional 20 MI-6 Hooks, each capable of lifting a fully armed paratroop company. Finally, the number of T-54/55 tanks had been enlarged from 950 in 1970 to 1,500 two years later, of the T-34s from 250 to 400, and of armored personnel carriers from 900 to 2,000. <sup>36/</sup>

This sustained military buildup was hardly disturbed by the political quarrels that increasingly troubled the Soviet-Egyptian relationship in the period from Nasser's death on September 28, 1970, to the expulsion of Soviet missile crews and combat pilots in July 1972. And when the



Russians left, the SAM system, which had been manned by between 12,000 and 15,000 Soviet military personnel, was kept intact. With the aid of 100 or so Soviet technicians who remained and the additional advisers who may have returned when relations improved in early 1973, the air defense system was maintained and its lethal effectiveness was demonstrated in October 1973.<sup>37/</sup>

#### Nasser's Strategy

Nasser's secret visit to Moscow in January 1970 was born of desperation. A greatly expanded Soviet commitment, including the use of Soviet armed forces, was needed to restore his domestic equilibrium and international prestige. Such a commitment accorded with his strategy of enmeshing the Soviet Union in the military defense of Egypt, not only to strengthen Egypt's defense capability but also to heighten tension between the superpowers and force the internationalization of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Though military matters took precedence, Nasser did not overlook political and diplomatic opportunities to strengthen Egypt's position in relation to Israel. His main target was the United States, which he hoped to induce to withhold the twenty-five Phantoms and one hundred Skyhawks it planned to send to Israel. On February 2, 1970, at an international conference of parliamentarians in Cairo, Nasser charged that the United States bore the greatest responsibility for the violence in the Middle East because of its support of the "aggression" against Egypt and aid to Israel.<sup>38/</sup> As long as U.S. arms poured into Israel, he implied, the Arabs would seek arms from the USSR. A week later, in an interview with two American journalists,

Nasser said that, if the United States sold more aircraft to Israel, he would do everything he could to get Soviet help, including SAM-3s. <sup>39/</sup>

The theme that U.S. support for Israel was pushing Cairo to turn to the Soviet Union for military aid was repeated by Nasser in an interview given James Reston on February 14. Nasser used the Western press to convey reasonableness and to justify his reliance on the Soviet Union.

The Egyptian (and presumably Soviet) strategy of dissuading President Nixon from fulfilling Israeli requests for more aircraft, even while Egypt was accepting the influx of Soviet arms and military personnel, was effective. Though Nixon was disposed to supply the F-4s and A-4s, "the rest of the bureaucracy was generally opposed. . . arguing that Israeli military superiority was still unquestioned and that Soviet arms shipments were a response to Israel's reckless campaign of deep-penetration bombing using the Phantoms." <sup>40/</sup> Moreover, Nixon's deferral of a decision in February, March, and April was shaped by several other factors: his "displeasure at the way in which the American Jewish community had treated French President Pompidou during his visit in late February"; Washington's resumption of talks with the Soviet Union against the promising backdrop of political concessions Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin said Moscow had obtained from Nasser in return for new arms shipments; and the fear that further aid to Israel might adversely affect the already weak position of Jordan's King Hussein. <sup>41/</sup>

The disposition to accept Soviet assurances of the "defensive" character of its deployment of SAMs was no doubt reinforced in the frequent talks of Donald Bergus, head of the small unofficial U.S. mission in Cairo, with Nasser; though formal diplomatic relations with the United States had been broken during the June War, Nasser maintained close contact through Bergus.

With military relief at hand, Nasser's political dilemma was clearly expressed by his de facto spokesman, Mohamed Heikal: "The parties to the local struggle cannot impose peace and the parties to the international struggle cannot declare war. Therefore, the Middle East crisis has entered a strange state--a vacuum in which it is lost between war and peace." <sup>42/</sup> Encouraged by Rogers' announcement on March 23 that the United States had decided not to sell Israel the additional Phantoms and Skyhawks, Nasser agreed to meet with Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Joseph Sisco. The talks (April 10 to 14) with the first high-ranking American official to visit Cairo since the June War, and Nasser's uneasiness over Egypt's heavy losses and military dependence on the Soviet Union, prompted him, in a major speech on May 1, to call for a new American initiative. It was delayed, however, by Nixon's preoccupation with Vietnam, specifically, the U.S. invasion of Cambodia on April 30 and the consequent domestic backlash. But on June 19, on receiving Rogers' proposal for a three-month cease-fire and a resumption of talks under Dr. Gunnar Jarring, the UN secretary general's special representative, Nasser hurriedly arranged a trip to Moscow (June 29-July 20), where talks <sup>43/</sup> led to decisions of far-reaching importance and resulted in Nasser's acceptance on July 22 of Rogers' proposals. The cease-fire effective on the evening of August 7, was predicated on assumptions of continued Soviet protection against Israeli military power and increased American political pressure on Israel for extensive concessions.

In the interim, Egypt was to be systematically built up and prepared for the eventuality of another round of fighting. Nasser had used his Soviet connection for the defense and promotion of Egypt's interests. On his death in September 1970, he bequeathed his successors a Soviet legacy that was to serve Egypt well in the following years.

### American and Israeli Reactions

The failure of an intensive American initiative in the fall of 1969, the essentials of which were publicly set forth by Secretary of State Rogers on December 9, 1969, meant that the war of attrition would continue until the situation on the battlefield made the combatants more receptive to diplomacy. Moscow did not accept Nixon's attempt to link patron pressure on its warring clients in the Middle East with improvement in U.S.-Soviet relations and progress toward a SALT agreement. The Nixon administration's absorption with SALT, the war in Vietnam, West German Chancellor Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik, and probings for an opening to China led Washington to adopt a watch-and-wait attitude toward the fighting in Egypt. The President reacted mildly to Kosygin's warning letter of January 31 and only a bit more forcefully in his State of the World message a few weeks later. Although he urged restraint on the Russians, he accepted their assurance of the defensive nature of the Soviet arms and troops dispatched to Egypt; and he shelved Israel's request for additional aircraft, content for the moment to let battlefield developments give new forms to political initiatives.

The Israelis, intent on forcing Nasser to comply with the 1967 cease-fire agreement, sought to sustain their devastating air war. The "disappointment and concern" expressed by Foreign Minister Abba Eban the day after Rogers announced (on March 23, 1970) that President Nixon had decided to hold Israel's request for additional aircraft in abeyance turned to mounting uneasiness as the scale of direct Soviet military involvement became clearer. On March 20 Dayan described the expansion of SAM sites as "the first stage of the Sovietization of the Egyptian war machine"; on

April 14 he held the manning of missile sites by Soviet personnel to be "a very grave matter" and warned the Russians that if need be "we shall bomb you"; and on April 29 the Israeli government formally charged that "for the first time Soviet pilots are flying operational missions from military installations under their control in Egypt." The Israeli contention that Soviet armed forces were changing the military balance was no longer dismissed by Washington, and President Nixon became more receptive to Israeli requests for aircraft replacements; hence toward the end of April the White House took over from the State Department responsibility for the day-to-day supervision of American policy toward the crisis.

Though Vietnam and Cambodia still absorbed most of the President's attention, he could no longer ignore the regional and global implications of the deepening Soviet participation in the Egyptian-Israeli war. Washington was encouraged by Nasser's speech of May 1, calling on Nixon to understand the Arab position and urge Israel to comply with the principles of Resolution 242, and making clear that a decisive moment in Arab-American relations had been reached--"either we will be estranged forever or there will be a new serious and definite start . . . the situation is delicate and . . . the consequences are extremely dangerous." However, without tangible evidence of Soviet restraint or indeed of some definitive statement from Moscow on where it intended to draw the line of involvement, Nixon decided to resume the supply of military equipment promised to Israel in the December 1968 arms agreement. Eban was so informed on May 21 and was asked only that the Israeli government withhold publicity and show "a degree of flexibility on terms of a settlement. This was forthcoming on May 26, when Prime Minister Golda Meir formally announced that Israel continued to accept UN Resolution as the basis for a settlement and would agree to something akin to the Rhodes formula

for talks." <sup>44/</sup> Ignoring a Soviet overture in early June for a joint approach, Nixon authorized the Rogers proposal, which was presented to Cairo and Jerusalem on June 19. Although the Israeli cabinet rejected the proposal, Ambassador Itzhak Rabin in Washington "objected to the tone of the message to Nixon and did not communicate it to the White House." <sup>45/</sup> For more than a month Washington and Jerusalem negotiated their differences, agreeing finally on July 25 after Prime Minister Meir had received various assurances from President Nixon. In overriding the strong opposition in her coalition government, Meir decided that the risks of a rejection were greater than those of acceptance, a judgment expressed in Dayan's comment that "Israel is not so strong that she can afford to lose allies." <sup>46/</sup> The Israeli government publicly accepted the American plan on July 31.

In seeking the "expulsion" of Soviet forces from Egypt, the White House saw the Soviet military entrenchment in Egypt as part of a more general Soviet challenge to U.S. world influence and as a Middle East complement to Soviet arms aid to Hanoi. On July 1 President Nixon said: "You cannot separate what happens in Vietnam from the Mideast or from Europe or any place else."

That is why, as the Soviet Union moves in to support the UAR, it makes it necessary for the United States to evaluate what the Soviet Union does, and once the balance of power is upset, we will do what is necessary to maintain Israel's strength vis-à-vis its neighbors, not because we want Israel to be in a position to wage war--that is not it--but because that is what will deter its neighbors from attacking it. <sup>47/</sup>

Nixon's determination to end the fighting and avoid a confrontation with the Soviet Union required the exercise of pressure on Israel. Inevitably, the asymmetry in American-Israeli priorities created difficulties between Washington and Jerusalem.

#### Outcomes

Soviet leaders had cause for satisfaction after the implementation of the cease-fire agreement of August 7, 1970. First, owing to the Soviet military involvement, Egypt had blunted and then reversed the Israeli offensive and reestablished an approximate military balance of power along the Suez Canal axis. Egypt's continued viability as a credible belligerent and Nasser's political survival, two prime Soviet objectives, had been realized and enhanced Soviet prestige among the courted progressive Arab states. Second, in his dependence on the Soviet Union, Nasser had granted military privileges that capped a decade of Soviet diplomatic effort and well served Soviet strategic objectives in the eastern Mediterranean and Red Sea areas. The Soviet navy gained access to Egyptian ports without having to secure permission for each visit and extensive repair and supply depots to facilitate the forward deployment of the Soviet Mediterranean fleet; the range of Soviet air reconnaissance was also greatly extended by the use of the Egyptian airfields under Soviet control. The Soviet military presence, enormously expanded from the level before the war of attrition, seemed solidly entrenched, based as it was on Nasser's complete reliance on Soviet equipment, expertise, and protection, and an impressive Soviet performance. Third, Moscow thought it had a dependent client capable of resisting but not



defeating Israel and subject to Soviet restraint; for despite its massive aid, Moscow sought only to protect Nasser from collapse, not to regain Egyptian lands. Fourth, Nasser's acceptance of the cease-fire suited the Soviet objectives of avoiding a confrontation with the United States and returning the conflict to the conference table, where the USSR would play a leading role in the negotiations for a political settlement. To sweeten Nasser's return to the diplomatic process, Moscow promised to extend and widen the air defense system, which, within a few months, would effectively neutralize Israeli air supremacy over the canal and protect Egypt in the event of a resumption of hostilities. Finally, as Brezhnev emphasized in a speech on August 28, 1970, it was Soviet military power that had given added impetus to political initiatives and had forced Israel to the conference table, though "with clenched teeth."

That the intervention could be mounted so expeditiously was due to the USSR's greatly expanded capability for projecting power abroad and its sense of confidence deriving from a nuclear arsenal matching that of the United States. In an era of nuclear stalemate, a superpower commanding powerful conventional forces can engage in low-cost, low-risk, far-ranging, intensive rivalry in the third world. The Soviet Union's response to Egypt's legitimate request for assistance was limited, focused on air defense, and cautiously escalatory, thereby limiting and complicating the reactions open to U.S. policymakers.

Israel and the United States could not ignore the Soviet use of armed forces. A tough, self-confident Israel was made to face up to the limits of its power, the extent of its dependence on the United States, and the

impossibility of defeating an Egypt protected by the Soviet Union--or even of intimidating Nasser into making concessions. The United States could not remain a passive bystander once the Soviet Union became directly involved in the fighting: committed to the existence of Israel as a state, though not to its post-1967 boundaries, suspicious of Soviet intentions and policies, and eager to shore up Western-oriented Arab regimes and prevent the radicalization of Arab politics, it could not maintain a situation of Israeli superiority without doing severe harm to its extensive economic and strategic interests in the Arab world.

After Nasser's death Moscow expanded its military and economic ties with Egypt, expecting continuity to prevail with his successors. However, some of Sadat's moves disturbed Moscow: his tentative retreat from Nasser's policy of nationalization; his downgrading of socialism; and in early February 1971--as a surprise foreign policy initiative--an offer to reopen the Suez Canal coupled with an underlying combativeness. Moscow's uneasiness was soon compounded by the domestic crisis in Egypt. In early May, charging a plot to unseat him, Sadat purged most of the Nasserist elite with whom Moscow had begun to feel comfortable. In an attempt to preserve the privileged Soviet position in Egypt and prevent Sadat from looking to the United States, Moscow induced him to seal Egypt's relationship with the USSR in a treaty of friendship and cooperation. Sadat agreed, seeing in the treaty, signed on May 27, 1971. Soviet recognition of his legitimacy and reaffirmation of promises of weapons and support in the event of another war.

In the following year, though, Sadat became convinced, first, that Moscow's reluctance to provide "offensive" weapons concealed a basic opposition

to Egyptian resort to the military option to regain occupied Arab territory, and second, that Moscow was content with the existing situation of "no war, no peace," because it allowed the Soviet Union to pursue detente with the United States. These conclusions led to the expulsion of Soviet military personnel in July 1972 and a period of Soviet-Egyptian tension. Five months later, his exploration for a Western alternative having proved unrewarding, Sadat again turned to Moscow, which, eager to keep a military foothold, responded by reopening the arms tap, making possible the fourth Arab-Israeli war in October 1973.

By the summer of 1973, three years after Moscow had saved the Egyptians from certain defeat, the Soviet position in Egypt had slipped considerably, but still retained a number of advantages. In the economic sphere, the Soviet Union played an important role in the industrial sector. In the military sphere, though forced to relinquish its unlimited use of Egyptian airfields, it was permitted the continued use of ports and anchorages, though on less preferential terms than before. It retained these concessions on an increasingly constricted basis after the October War until April 1976, one month after Sadat unilaterally abrogated the 1971 treaty and ended the once significant Soviet military presence. 48/

The Soviet-Egyptian estrangement (only partially eased by Sadat's conciliatory moves from December 1972 on) contrasted with the Soviet-American detente. The superpower differences of 1970 had faded in the glow from SALT I, the Nixon-Brezhnev exchange of visits, and mushrooming economic, cultural, and scientific agreements. For the time, Moscow was content to keep its relations with Egypt in a minor key. Despite the strain, there were advantages. The forced removal of Soviet troops from Egypt engendered

improvement in Soviet-American relations by easing Washington's concern about the Soviet challenge in the Middle East. Also, believing that Washington would not pressure Israel into making concessions that could occasion a major reorientation in Egyptian foreign policy, Moscow expected the Egyptians to maintain a Soviet connection. The American relationship was of great importance to Moscow, which looked forward then to the extensive credit and trade concessions recommended to the Congress by President Nixon--at least until the October war, which reversed Washington's sanguine outlook about the future of the U.S.-Soviet detente.

In retrospect, it seems clear that had Moscow not used its forces to support Egypt in 1970, the improvement in U.S.-Soviet relations that sprouted briefly in 1972 would not have withered after October 1973: 1970 was an essential precursor to 1973. Without the Soviet intervention to save Nasser and reverse the Arab-Israeli military imbalance, the Arab-Israeli conflict would have remained locked in the situation of "no war, no peace." One concomitant of this might have been a Soviet policy of greater restraint in arms transfers to Egypt and Syria. If so, Sadat would not have had a feasible military option in October 1973, no superpower confrontation would have occurred, and detente might have developed more fully. This would have entailed tacit Soviet recognition of the limits of its possibilities in the Arab East and acceptance of a lesser presence. But no vital Soviet security interest would have been jeopardized; indeed, the infusion of American capital and technology into the USSR that might have resulted from a less imperial Kremlin policy in the Arab East would probably have resulted in a significant boost to its economy and overall position.

in Europe. But this would have meant curtailment of the ambitious "forward policy" started by Khrushchev and continued by Brezhnev.

On the other hand, "had Moscow backed an Egyptian crossing of the canal in 1970, the result might have been a Soviet-American confrontation. Assuming it would have stopped short of a nuclear showdown, a Soviet challenge of such magnitude might have greatly enhanced Moscow's standing in the Arab world. However, it would also have precluded a SALT agreement, detente in Europe, and economic concessions; it might also have pushed the United States closer to the People's Republic of China. In such an environment, U.S.-Soviet relations would have been worse than they actually became after the October War.

#### Soviet Relations with Sudan and the Anyanya Insurgency

When Sudan joined the other Arab states in June 1967 in breaking ties with the United States, the USSR's interest in improving their modest relationship was whetted. For its part, Sudan hoped to acquire modern weapons to offset traditional reliance on Britain, with whom it had broken diplomatic relations the previous year over the Rhodesian issue. A Sudanese military mission went to Moscow in late July 1967, and an arms agreement was announced on August 6. <sup>49/</sup> At the end of September a Soviet military delegation visited Khartoum to discuss the details, which reportedly included the establishment of Sudan's first air academy.

Implementation of the agreement languished, however, because Moscow was already heavily committed in Vietnam, Egypt, and Syria and, the Sudanese need not being critical, Moscow could afford to dole out small, irregular

packages of arms in an attempt to gain better treatment for the Sudanese Communist Party (SCP). The arrest of Moawiya Ibrahim, the secretary of the SCP, in late October 1967 brought a strong denunciation in Pravda. Labeling the actions against Ibrahim and other Communists "of a clearly provocative nature," Pravda blamed "rightist forces" and wrote that "instead of struggling against the accomplices of imperialism and aggression, the Sudanese reaction plans to concentrate all its fire on the Communist patriots"; it noted that this would "weaken the possibility of Sudan making a positive contribution to the Arab cause against Israel." 50/ The implication was that Soviet arms could be put to better use than support for such a regime.

Despite a number of delays, by mid-September 1968 Sudanese officials said that "a new agreement on the reinforcement of the Sudanese Air Force has been concluded." By the end of the year, a trickle of Soviet arms had arrived, and Soviet advisers "were selecting officers for training in the USSR." 51/ Arab sources placed the value of the Soviet-Sudanese arms agreement at well above the frequently mentioned \$100 million price tag. But continued Soviet annoyance with the treatment of local Communists kept the arms deliveries minimal, a succession of Sudanese military missions to Moscow notwithstanding. Indeed, on the eve of the May 25, 1969, coup in Sudan, there was a mission in Moscow, seeking, as had its predecessors, a speedup in the Soviet supply process.

The nine army officers led by Colonel (later Major-General and then President) Gaafar Mohammed al-Nimeiry, a thirty-nine-year-old graduate of the military academy at Omdurman, who seized power on May 25, 1969, immediately

made known their leftist orientation, denouncing imperialism, calling for close ties with the Soviet Union, and recognizing East Germany on May 28, thus becoming the second "progressive" and antiimperialist Arab country to do so within a month (Iraq had taken the step on April 30). Though banning all political parties, Nimeiry did place Communists in the cabinet and courted the goodwill of leftists to counterbalance the might of "conservative, traditionalist, religious, and pro-Western forces" and gain the support of the trade unions, students, and intelligentsia. 52/ In so doing he reinforced Moscow's belief in the progressive character of the regime. Four members of the Revolutionary Command Council were Communists or leftists: Major Hashim Muhammad al-Ata, Major Faruq Uthman Hamdallah, Lieutenant Colonel Babikr an-Nur Uthman (these three were to be leading actors in the Communist-supported abortive coup of July 1971), and Prime Minister Abubakr Awadallah, the only civilian on the RCC. At least eight of the twenty-one cabinet members were leftists or Communists.

The new leadership took steps to end corruption, solve the problems of agriculture and the rebellion in the south, and strengthen the armed forces by obtaining modern arms and improving military training and institutes. From the very beginning, it looked to the Soviet Union for arms and assistance in upgrading the Sudanese armed forces. Nimeiry needed Soviet pilots and advisers, in particular, to assist in counterinsurgency operations in the south. Not only had Sudan been without a great power patron since the break with Britain in 1966 and with the United States after the June War, but it faced disintegration because of the growing challenge from the insurrectionists, who were encouraged by the aid they were receiving from

Uganda, Zaire, and Ethiopia, traditional enemy of Sudan and staunch ally of the United States.

#### An Opportunity Seized

The Soviet leadership was quick to recognize the new military government of Sudan. In the Soviet press, unadorned reporting of Prime Minister Awadallah's affirmation of peaceful coexistence and opposition to colonialism and neocolonialism gave way, within one week, to praise for the new government's strengthening of "the front against Israeli aggression and imperialist prying in the Middle East." 53/ The initial actions of the ruling RCC were unquestionably congenial to Soviet interests: diplomatic recognition of the German Democratic Republic; identification with Nasser and "progressive" Arab and African states; sharp criticism of "Western imperialism and Zionist intrigues"; and overtures for closer ties with the Soviet bloc.

Soviet leaders were aware of Sudan's difficulties: a civil war in the south against the Anyanyas--the military arm of the amorphous coalition of black Christian tribes and clans of the Southern Sudan--who had started insurgency operations in 1963; 54/ a troubled economy; and powerful social and economic groups whose outlook was antithetical to Nimeiry's reformist bent. But as the largest country in Africa and a strategic land mass between Arab and Black Africa bordering on eight countries and the Red Sea, the Sudan was a tempting political target. Soviet planners may well have argued that securing a foothold there would help forge an anti-Western Arab coalition and would open up new opportunities for the Soviet Union, such as the use of Sudanese ports to facilitate the forward deployment of the Soviet



navy, which had started calling at Aden and Hodeida the previous year, and a greater ability to move easily in Central Africa in the future.

Nimeiry's foreign policy orientation was commendable. Moreover, he seemed genuinely committed to a political solution of the "southern question." Whereas his predecessors had sought to suppress the Anyanya movement by increasingly bloody and costly military campaigns, Nimeiry impressed Soviet observers with his willingness to grant the southerners, who were ethnically Africans, not Arabs, substantial autonomy and to bring them into the central government. 55/ His promise of regional autonomy assumed immediate credibility with his appointment of "a prominent southerner (the Communist lawyer, Joseph Garang) to the newly created Ministry of Southern Affairs in June 1969"; 56/ and his conciliatory position toward the Anyanyas suggested that Sudanese requests for accelerated and expanded arms assistance were intended to strengthen the regime against "reactionary" enemies and were not likely to enmesh the Soviet Union in an unending civil war. By late June the Soviet government's positive attitude toward Nimeiry was reflected in the statement Sudanese Communist Party Secretary-General Mohammed Abdul Khalek Mahgoub made at the Moscow Conference of Communist and Workers Parties, calling for support of the "Sudanese revolution."

Nimeiry's anti-Western, pro-Nasser, Soviet-bloc-oriented position was essentially what motivated a favorable Kremlin reaction to requests for arms and military advisers. Nimeiry's antifeudal, anticonservative, generally progressive domestic line no doubt also helped, as did minor events like the creation in Moscow in late August of the USSR-Sudan Friendship Society. 57/

Throughout the summer the Soviet press continued its commendatory coverage of events in Sudan.

By late 1969 Soviet arms and advisers began to arrive in appreciable numbers. During the buildup and modernization of the Sudanese armed forces in the next eighteen months, the Russians divorced their interest in military advantages from their political disappointment with Nimeiry's changing attitude toward Sudanese Communists and his inability to find a solution to the southern problem. Regarding Nimeiry's foreign policy orientation and reliance on Soviet military support as the basis for future intimacy, they accepted the disquieting aspects of his domestic policy. The 1968 arms agreement had brought a few Soviet military instructors by midsummer and some arms by early 1969. After the May 1969 coup Moscow had stepped up its flow of arms because it saw the Nimeiry regime as a target of opportunity; because it expected arms and economic aid to establish a solid long-term relationship; and because it could not afford to ignore Nimeiry's disclosures of plots--allegedly with Ethiopian, U.S., West German, and Israeli backing--to topple his regime.

In anticipation of a visit by Nimeiry in early November 1969, Pravda devoted a lengthy article to the situation in Sudan and revealed the problems faced by Soviet decisionmakers. 58/ It praised the "progressive" regime for conducting "an active anti-imperialist foreign policy" and taking important steps to strengthen relations with the Soviet Union. Acknowledging that the internal problems confronting the Sudanese government were "very complex," the Pravda article criticized "reactionary circles" who have turned "to stirring up anti-communism and downgrading the policy of the

Sudanese Communist Party in hopes of attracting nationalist elements," and who, realizing that open attacks "on socialist goals" would fail, try to pass themselves off as supporters of "socialism without communism." Pravda's admonishment of Nimeiry was moderate. Whatever disappointment Moscow felt over the SCP's diminished status in the cabinet, it continued to praise the regime's general domestic and foreign policies. The prospect of closer state-to-state relations was enough to warrant the expanded military commitments, especially since most of the arms were destined for use in the south, where there was minimal danger to Soviet advisers.

Monetary estimates of Soviet military assistance during the 1969 period vary; figures of \$65 million and \$150 million have been mentioned, demonstrating a combination of difficulty in assigning dollar values to Soviet equipment and uncertainty about certain magnitudes involved. 59/ The equipment provided included tanks, armored personnel carriers, surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), and several types of aircraft--jet fighters, transports, and helicopters. The aircraft and helicopters included sixteen MIG-21 short-range, supersonic fighters; six AN-12 heavy cargo planes, with a 44,000-pound payload, capable of transporting about one hundred troops; five AN-24 twin-turboprop transports, capable of carrying about fifty troops; ten MI-8 helicopters and three MI-4 utility helicopters, each capable of carrying a small number of troops; and one battery of SAM-2s. Most of the aircraft were delivered from mid-July 1970 on, when the fighting in the south once again intensified. Presumably, they were useful for counterinsurgency actions.

If behavior is an indication of intent, the diverse aircraft signaled Soviet support for the Nimeiry government's military operations against the

Anyanyas and apparent decision to press for a victory in the field. Given the nature of the enemy, the commitment required of Moscow would have remained modest compared to those made to Egypt if Nimeiry had continued the counterinsurgency campaign for several years; the fighting was at a low level and posed little danger to the Soviet pilots who accompanied the above aircraft and who apparently flew combat missions; the battlefield was far from the public eye and operations could be carried out with impunity against a poorly armed foe. But political developments in Khartoum in July 1971 dramatically altered Nimeiry's approach to the rebellion. As a result, the Russians had little, if anything, to do with the nonmilitary solution that Nimeiry finally fashioned.

There is little information on the role Soviet military personnel played in actual operations against the southern insurgents from 1970 to July 1971. Neither the Sudanese nor the Russians write about it, and Western accounts, even those from the field, rely heavily on rumor and inference. I piece things together as follows.

Despite the government's efforts at reform, which went slowly, the fighting in the south never completely stopped. By early 1970 it had erupted again with considerable intensity and it continued intermittently throughout the year. The government used about two-thirds of its army of 28,000 to 35,000 men which had been expanded between 1969 and 1971, in the south, where the terrain, unlike that in the north around Khartoum, is overgrown and marshy. Poor roads made operations and the deployment of armor difficult, and the Sudanese army depended on Soviet aircraft for bombing villages, flushing guerillas, and moving troops quickly to places where guerilla units had been sighted. Though about 525 Sudanese officers were

being trained in Soviet bloc countries, 60/ relatively few, if any, had finished flight training or were able to fly the MIG-21s or the helicopters. Since the logistics of supplying Sudanese troops in the south and the tactics of dealing with the insurgents placed a premium on air support, presumably some of the 500 Soviet military advisers flew both supply and combat missions, although possibly only as copilots with Sudanese officers. Given the isolated areas in which the insurgents operated and the absence of trained Western observers, detection was virtually impossible, and the Russians could freely have flown missions to track the Anyanyas. It is also conceivable that some of the pilots were Egyptians: after the June War, Egypt had helped Sudan establish an air academy, partly to train Egyptian cadets out of range of Israeli aircraft. Certainly, relations between Nimeiry and Nasser were close.

As in Iraq in 1974-75, the Russians were prompted to help a progressive regime suppress an insurgent movement as a way of ensuring the survival of a leadership deemed congenial to Soviet strategic and political interests. Throughout 1970 and early 1971, Moscow, to judge from Soviet press coverage, continued to view Nimeiry as progressive, beset by domestic intrigues of right-wing sects and groups, and bogged down in a rebellion fomented by imperialist forces. Although Moscow was disappointed that he had turned on pro-Moscow Communist, his anti-imperialist foreign policy and extensive nationalization of foreign enterprises tilted the balance in favor of accelerated deliveries of weapons and such air support as was needed. Moreover, the new challenge to Nimeiry from traditionalist, anti-Communist Muslim sects, notably the Mahdists, strengthened Moscow's determination to support his regime.

On March 25 and 26, 1970, Nimeiry suppressed the Ansar (Mahdist) insurrection on Aba Island, setting off a widespread crackdown on the Mahdists that included the killing of their leader. According to one report, as yet unconfirmed by other sources, MIG aircraft flown by Egyptian or possibly Soviet pilots strafed the island in support of government troops. <sup>61/</sup> Two weeks later, in a move apparently designed to convince other religious groups that the crushing of the Mahdists was not motivated by Communist tendencies in his government, Nimeiry deported the secretary-general of the pro-Moscow wing of the SCP. Mahgoub's deportation (he returned in late July and was placed under house arrest) improved, to some degree, the position of the rival Communist faction of Ahmad Sulayman and Moawiya Ibrahim, who were willing to dissolve the party in order to remain in the government, which they thought they could influence from within. <sup>62/</sup> In May, to reassure his leftist adherents, Nimeiry nationalized all banks and major trading corporations, "Sudanized" many foreign enterprises, and signed a new agreement with Moscow, adding Soviet experts to various ministries. The factional infighting between Nimeiry and the Communists came to a head in November 1970, not long after the departure from Sudan of a Soviet delegation led by Politburo member Dmitri Polyansky. Three leftist members of the RCC were purged: Major Faruq Uthman Hardallah, Lieutenant Colonel Babikr an-Nur Uthman, and Major Hashim Muhammad al-Ata. None of these actions interfered with the continued supply of Soviet aircraft for use against the Anyanyas.

In February 1971 Nimeiry saw "no room for the Communists in the Sudanese revolution." <sup>63/</sup> Moscow (and Sadat) tried to mediate, but without success, as Nimeiry attacked Communist strongholds in the trade unions and youth

organizations. Nonetheless, Moscow maintained close relations with the Nimeiry government, receiving, for example, an RCC delegation at the Twenty-fourth Congress of the CPSU (March 30 to April 8, 1971).

On July 19, 1971, Major Hashim al-Ata, who had been removed from the RCC in November 1970, in turn deposed Nimeiry, imprisoning him and his supporters. However, the failure to execute the old leaders "proved to be a fatal tactical mistake of the new revolutionaries since, on July 22, a successful 'counter-counter-coup'" brought Nimeiry back to power. <sup>64/</sup> Unlike the unsuccessful putschists, Nimeiry took a bloody revenge, executing the officers as well as leading Communists, including Mahgoub and Joseph Garang. His relations with Moscow deteriorated sharply because, though there was no evidence that it had engineered the coup, the Soviet Union, in a departure from its characteristic treatment of coups in progressive states, had come out immediately in support of al-Ata's government and tried to pressure Sadat into following suit, thereby heightening Nimeiry's suspicion of its complicity. Nimeiry ignored Soviet appeals to spare those sentenced to death in connection with the events of July 19 to 22. Although relations between Moscow and Khartoum recovered, they never again approached the closeness of the previous two years.

The coup and worsening domestic tension prompted Nimeiry to make essential concessions to the southerners. A settlement was finally reached in Addis Ababa on February 27, 1972, between the Sudanese government and the Anyanya leaders, without any Soviet influence. It came about through Nimeiry's decision to shelve Pan-Arab ambitions, offer the southern Sudanese

a substantial measure of autonomy, include them in the political leadership of the ruling one-party Sudanese Socialist Union, and concentrate on internal development. Changed attitudes in neighboring nations, particularly Ethiopia, further improved the chance for a settlement.

Support from abroad was crucial in sustaining the Anyanya revolt. Uganda and Ethiopia, and Zaire to a much lesser degree, took in refugees and provided funds and staging grounds that made sustained rebel resistance possible, though victory proved elusive. Their assistance derived from identification with the blacks and antipathy to Arabization; it predated Nimeiry's coup and Soviet involvement.

All three countries were anti-Soviet, anti-Communist, and basically pro-Western (though Uganda's Milton Obote, a leading member of the non-aligned groupings, was a frequent critic ). Their behavior was not shaped by cold war pressure; superpower rivalry took a back seat to local animosities. Moreover, the Soviet factor was too negligible to have any noticeable effect on their foreign policy position, whose sharp changes were consequences of domestic shifts of power and perception.

In Uganda, Obote had started by 1969 to lessen his support of the Anyanyas and his close ties with Israel, and to improve relations with Nimeiry and the Arab countries. But he was deposed in January 1971 and his successor, Idi Amin Dada reversed this line, at one point accusing the Sudanese of abetting incursions into the country by pro-Obote groups. However, after the 1972 agreement ending the Sudanese civil war was signed in Addis Ababa, Amin became friendlier with Nimeiry, broke with Israel, and turned to Libya for subsidies. In Ethiopia, Emperor Haile Selassie played



a major role in mediating an end to the conflict. Pleased by Nimeiry's anti-Communist tack after the July 1971 event, he improved relations with Sudan, thereby weakening the Anyanyas' military option and persuading them to settle. He welcomed Nimeiry's reconciliation with the southern Sudanese, his turn toward Central Africa and away from the Arab world affairs -- specifically, his downplaying of the cause of Muslim secessionists in the Ethiopian province of Eritrea -- and his attempt to normalize relations with the United States. With these changes in the diplomatic environment, Zaire lost interest in the Anyanyas: President Mobutu's interest had stemmed only from animosity toward a Sudanese leadership, no longer in power, that had supported the rebel Simbas against him in the mid-1960s.

#### A Good Hand Squandered

Nimeiry had been pleased with Soviet air support in the counterinsurgency war in the south. However, the alacrity with which Moscow backed Hashim al-Ata's coup was its undoing. Whether through overconfidence, poor advice, ignorance of the local scene, or underestimation of Arab reaction, Moscow blundered. In its eagerness to see the SCP in a position of power, Moscow squandered a strong position. It intensified Nimeiry's domestic anticommunism and suspicion of the Soviet Union (despite the resumption of a relationship of sorts within a couple of months) and turned him toward the West and closer relations with the People's Republic of China, the former being far more important than the latter as a result of Peking's inability to provide much assistance. Finally, it resulted in a diminished Soviet military presence. The setback in Sudan, unlike that in Egypt, was not due to Sudanese

dissatisfaction with the level, quality, or performance of Soviet military advisers; it was due to faulty Soviet political judgment in backing a Communist dark horse that did not know how to finish the race.

The timely support that Nimeiry received from Egypt and Libya was crucial.<sup>65/</sup> Both Sadat and Qaddafi acted to forestall a seizure of power by a Communist-inspired clique, irrespective of their assessments of what the Soviet Union was or was not doing. Quite simply, they opposed any Communist or Communist-oriented group coming to power in an Arab country on their borders.

Though regional developments can affect relations between superpowers, Sudan was peripheral to the U.S.-Soviet strategic relationship, so its change toward the Soviet Union had no notable effect. Moreover, the Soviet position in Sudan was still in the formative stages; it was more a case of an unrealized potential than an actual loss. Once the dust had settled, relations returned to a semblance of normalcy, but with a sharply reduced flow of Soviet arms and advisers and an end to the use of Soviet pilots in the south; this reflected Nimeiry's suspicion and his diminished need after the 1972 Addis Ababa agreement rather than Soviet second thoughts about the wisdom of trying to retain a foothold in the area.

Since then the situation has drastically changed. The political solution Nimeiry fashioned for the southern problem has so far held up. After July 1971, realizing that the future of his regime depended on his solving internal problems, Nimeiry widened his political base. He suppressed the Communists, downgraded relations with the Soviet Union, and negotiated an end to the civil war. In 1977-78 he effected a reconciliation with the

Mahdist leadership. Reversing his nationalization policy, he encouraged foreign investment, especially from conservative Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Relations with the United States improved, though there was a temporary setback when the Palestinians who had murdered the American ambassador in Khartoum in March 1973 were turned over to the Egyptians and eventually freed. Overall, Nimeiry's tilt has been toward the West and away from the Soviet bloc. In May 1977 he expelled the remaining ninety Soviet military advisers and looked to France and to a lesser extent the United States for arms.

Although Moscow did not use its armed forces to assist al-Ata's coup, there is continuing speculation about whether the Soviet advisers tried indirectly through their relationship with junior officers at the military bases outside Khartoum to interfere with the rescue of Nimeiry or the reinforcement of his supporters in Khartoum by encouraging the Sudanese to obey the orders of the al-Ata government only. 66/ But even if the Soviet advisers had persuaded the Sudanese troops to stay in the barracks, the outcome in Khartoum would have been the same, because the main forces used to bring Nimeiry back to power were the Egyptian troops based in the area and the Sudanese flown in from the Suez Canal front.

A direct use of Soviet armed forces to affect the political outcome was just not feasible. It would have alienated most of the Arab world. Even had the Russians contemplated it, they had only five hundred advisers in the country, and these were largely isolated in a few military installations. There was no way they could have mounted a major intervention on their own so far from home bases. Had Moscow stayed out of the Sudan

altogether neither its credibility nor its position with Egypt, Syria, or Iraq would have suffered greatly; nor would it have been tempted into suddenly deserting a progressive leadership in the interests of advancing the cause of a Communist-backed one, the net effect of which was to exacerbate Sudanese, and Arab, suspicion of Soviet ambitions and possible duplicity. The prospective gains from pursuing a forward policy in the Sudan were not important to the advancement of Soviet interests in the region, at least in the short term, whereas the setback complicated, though far from precluded, Moscow's policy of meddling in the Horn of Africa.

#### Suppressing the Kurds in Iraq

On July 17, 1968, the Baath returned to power in Iraq. Unlike its predecessor, this regime sought to maintain, indeed to improve, relations with the Soviet Union. Beset by internal troubles, determined to find a solution to the Kurdish problem, committed to an anti-Western policy and a more ambitious course in the Persian Gulf, the Baathists experimented with different ways of tolerating Iraqi Communists within a Baathist government, as part of their strategy of courting Moscow and exploiting divisions in the Kurdish movement, a part of which was Communist. For economic and strategic reasons, Moscow, too, was eager to strengthen the Soviet-Iraqi relationship, and in the process downgraded the importance of the Iraqi Communist party and the Kurdish issue in its decisions.

Underlying a substantial Soviet economic commitment was Moscow's emerging strategic interest in the Persian Gulf. Initially, Moscow had seen the area as one of incipient threat. However, the once considerable Soviet concern over its "southern tier" had eased with Iraq's withdrawal from the Baghdad Pact

in 1959 and the shah of Iran's pledge to the USSR on September 15, 1962, that the Iranian government "will not grant any foreign nation the right of possessing any kind of rocket bases on Iranian soil." 67/

Differences with Iraq over what should be the basis for a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict never caused serious tension or interfered with the improvement of Soviet-Iraqi relations. In the late 1960s and early 1970s the political climate turned even more favorable. The British withdrawal from the gulf, the emergence of independent ministates in an area of residual Iraqi-Iranian-Saudi Arabian tension, and the growth of the Soviet navy, all stimulated Soviet interest in the strategic potential of manipulating the regional rivalries, quite apart from the prospects in the eastern Mediterranean that, in any event, derived essentially from the Arab-Israeli conflict. By the early 1970s the defensive aims that had shaped the early postwar Soviet policy of undermining the Western position in the Arab East had metamorphosed into a far-ranging policy of projecting Soviet influence for the promotion of regional and global objectives.

On April 9, 1972, during a visit to Baghdad, Soviet Premier Aleksei Kosygin and Iraqi President Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr signed a fifteen-year treaty of friendship and cooperation. The treaty signified the continual improvement in Soviet-Iraqi relations since the Baath had come to power in 1968. Moscow saw in the treaty the institutionalization of its expanding military, economic, and political presence in Iraq and the basis for a further consolidation of its overall position. Believing as it does in the positive role of treaties in advancing and cementing existing relationships between governments, 68/ the Soviet leadership no doubt was highly pleased

with this newest addition to its treaty network, others of the same model having been concluded the previous year with Egypt in May and India in August. The firm link to Iraq gave Moscow regular access to the Iraqi port of Umm Qasr and additional leverage in dealing with Iran; it also alerted the Arab states of the Persian Gulf to the Soviet quest for influence in the region.

The treaty brought Moscow problems as well. The Iraqis became signatories at least in part to enlist Soviet support in bringing the Kurds under control and the Communists into the Baathist fold. The Kurds are an unassimilated, fiercely nationalistic, non-Arab minority, constituting about one-quarter of the country's population and inhabiting the northeastern provinces, among them the oil-rich Mosul region. <sup>69/</sup> After the failure of a major uprising in 1944, many Kurds, including the important tribal leader, Mullah Mustafa al-Barzani, fled to the Soviet Union. Permitted by Brigadier Abdul Karim Kassem to return in 1958 after the overthrow of the pro-Western monarchy, they pressed for fundamental autonomy. Though Kassem hoped to use the Kurdish demands to offset the pro-Nasser Iraqi nationalists who favored a merger with the United Arab Republic (the federation of Syria and Egypt that lasted from February 1958 to September 1961), he was unable to control the intense desire for autonomy that motivated Barzani's adherents. Fighting broke out in late 1961 and went on for almost nine years.

A provisional agreement of March 1970 that ended the Kurdish rebellion broke down in late 1971, and sporadic fighting started once again. In November 1971 the Baath published its Charter of National Action, which held out the promise of freedom for political groups and, specifically, of

an alliance between the Baath and the Kurdish Democratic party (KDP). By giving Moscow a stake in the stability of the Baath regime, the Iraqi leadership expected the USSR to use its influence with the Kurds and the Iraqi Communist party (ICP) to help arrange a settlement. Moreover, the Baath knew that the Kurdish ability to wage war depended on military assistance from Iran, whose relations with the USSR were improving, so it hoped that a show of Soviet force on its behalf would keep Iran on the sidelines.

The treaty of friendship and cooperation signed by the Soviet Union and Iraq on April 9, 1972, was a landmark in their relationship: it denoted Moscow's full support for the Baathist regime and also Baghdad's readiness to rely on Soviet military and economic assistance and, perhaps more important, to use the Soviet connection to settle the Kurdish question. The treaty's significance was soon evident in the stepped-up pace of Soviet arms transfers (particularly tanks and aircraft) and trade, and the stream of Soviet technicians and advisers, all of which was extremely important to the Baathist government. Thus, for example, when Iraq nationalized the Iraqi Petroleum Company the new treaty relationship with Moscow made it feel more secure about any possible Western reaction.

After the October War, Baghdad resumed diplomatic relations with Iran, which cut back its assistance to the Kurds. This Iraqi diplomatic campaign was a prelude to concentrating on ending the Kurdish challenge by force if necessary and on terms less lenient than those set forth in the agreement of March 11, 1970.

As Soviet relations with the Baath improved and as the ICP drew closer to the Baath, agreeing on July 17, 1973 (after some pressure from Moscow), to join the National Progressive Front organized and led by the Baath, Moscow's impatience with the deterioration in relations between General Barzani's KDP and the ICP grew. The Soviet leadership tried unsuccessfully to mediate. 70/ Barzani's purge of Kurdish Communists, reluctance to join the front and acceptance of aid from pro-Western sources angered Moscow. His uncompromising position may have been the final straw that led Moscow to write off the KDP and accept the inevitability of a military solution to the Kurdish problem. Moscow had no choice, given its desire to consolidate state-to-state relations with Iraq, but to comply with the Baath's requests for military assistance.

Saddam Hussein Takriti, vice-president of the RRC and deputy secretary-general of the Baath, visited the USSR on February 24-25, 1974, undoubtedly to ensure Soviet support in the likely event that the Kurds rejected the government's offer of autonomy. On the fourth anniversary of the 1970 agreement, the government announced a watered-down plan for Kurdish self-rule, which, as Baghdad expected, Barzani termed inadequate. Thereafter heavy fighting began anew. To add to the complexities of the situation, a few weeks earlier there had been border clashes between Iraqi and Iranian troops that reversed the short-lived improvement in relations and threatened to complicate the Kurdish campaign, as well as to trigger hostilities between the two long-term regional rivals.



Calculations in Baghdad and Moscow

Though long a partisan of the Kurds, Moscow could not remain indifferent to the government's needs without risking its evolving special relation with the Iraqi Baathists. It knew that a Kurdish revolt threatened the stability of a regime whose predecessors had fallen because of this intractable issue and might undermine all that the Soviet-Iraqi relationship had brought Moscow; namely, close ties with an important country in the Persian Gulf area; access to the port of Umm Qasr, whose significance for Moscow was political rather than military (not only is the port poorly equipped to repair modern vessels, but its location at the closed end of the gulf limits its value in times of crisis); participation of the ICP in the government; expanded economic ties and an important role in the exploitation of Iraq's rich oil fields; a lucrative market for Soviet arms, with payment in oil; and an opportunity to improve relations with both Iraq and Iran, thereby creating a more favorable strategic environment for the advancement of Soviet objectives in the region as a whole. The demands of Moscow were not excessive, the rewards could be significant--strategically, politically, and economically--and the risks of involvement were less than those of noninvolvement.

Baghdad exploited Moscow's dilemma, knowing the Kremlin preferred a political solution but would in the interests of better relations with the Baath reluctantly go along with a military solution rather than allow the Kurds and their "imperialist" supporters (Iran and covert U.S. assistance) to threaten the Soviet position in the country. By increasing its arms purchases from the Soviet Union and thereby its dependence, the Baath further assured itself of expanded Soviet involvement.

By supporting the Baath, Moscow hoped to prevent a war between Iraq and Iran; it also expected that Baghdad's need to draw on Soviet support would help increase Soviet influence on the Baathists and, at the same time, impress upon the Kurds the futility of fighting and the need to compromise. The seriousness with which the Kremlin viewed the situation may be deduced from the visit to Baghdad in late March 1974 of Defense Minister Andrei Grechko and Minister of the Interior Nikolai Shchelokov, one to talk about military requirements, the other presumably to share intelligence information on the Kurds and on internal security. Throughout the spring and early summer, the Soviet media counseled the Kurdish leadership not to isolate itself from "progressive forces in the country and abroad" and to consider that "a bad peace was better than a good quarrel." Reports of Barzani's quest for arms in the West and the determination with which the Baath pushed its military preparations, even while it left open the offer of a settlement to Barzani, meant that Moscow could not equivocate on Baghdad's requests for assistance.

Though detailed information of Iraq's purchases and military buildup is difficult to obtain, it is known that Soviet arms shipments, heavy throughout 1972 and 1973, increased in 1974. Iraqi tanks lost in the October War were replaced with newer models, and the Soviet Union also supplied "the Frog surface-to-surface missile in 1974, a reflection of the growing Iranian threat as well as the escalating post-October War rearmament among the combatant states." 71/ In late May Soviet ships unloaded SAMs in Umm Qasr, possibly to protect Iraqi troops against Iranian air strikes. 72/ Moreover,

as the Iraqi army prepared a major offensive, Soviet air power played an important part. The Kurds claimed that Soviet pilots were assuming operational responsibilities at the Kirkuk air base, "the starting point for Iraqi Air Force bombing raids on Kurdish villages." 73/ The accusation was plausible. Soviet TU-22 supersonic bombers had appeared in Iraq as far back as October 1973. 74/ A year later, Western intelligence sources reported MIG-23 fighter-bombers being used against the Kurds. 75/ British journalists wrote of TU-16 reconnaissance flights over Pesh Merga (as Kurdish rebels called themselves) lines, 76/ yet Iraq was not known to have any pilots trained to fly the advanced MIGs or Tupolevs. The Russians could have calculated that willingness to use their personnel in support of the Iraqi offensive would appear as a commitment to the Iraqi regime and would give the shah pause for reassessment of direct Iranian involvement on behalf of the Kurds. The risks to Moscow were minimal, given the very limited commitment of pilots and planes and their minor role in the fighting.

Compared to the attention devoted to the Egyptian-Syrian-Israeli sector of the Middle East, the Soviet press's treatment of developments in Iraq was modest. But the message was clear; the right wing of the KDP, urged on by imperialist forces, was to blame for the resumption of military operations by isolating itself from progressive forces in the country and abroad. The nearest thing to a definitive Soviet statement was the assessment made by Lev Tolkunov, editor-in chief of Izvestiya, in one of a series of articles that he wrote on the Middle East in late July and early August 1974. 77/ He commended the Iraqi leadership for taking the road of progressive socioeconomic

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transformation, expressed concern over the separatist Kurdish movement, that was being incited by external forces, and emphasized the 1972 treaty that served the common interests of the two countries.

At about that time the Iraqi offensive against the Kurds had advanced farther than any had before, squeezing the Kurds into a narrowing strip along the Iranian border. However, the Iraqis could not achieve victory because Iranian protective artillery barrages and supplies of antitank missiles and ammunition stiffened Kurdish resistance. With the weather worsening and the Iranians apparently willing to escalate their involvement, the Baath feared another indecisive campaign and pressed Moscow for additional assistance. In late September, in closely spaced visits, Iraq's foreign minister and its chief of staff each went to Moscow to discuss ways of "strengthening cooperation and friendship." A month later, First Secretary of the ICP Aziz Muhammad, a Kurd elected to his post in 1964 and strongly identified with Moscow and ICP participation in the National Progressive Front, met with Politburo member Boris N. Ponomarev. The report in Pravda indicated that Aziz Muhammad emphasized the importance of the ICP-Baath cooperation and the front's progressive line in pressing socioeconomic reforms and a solution to the Kurdish problem, 78/ and presumably backed Baghdad's request for additional ~~arms~~ arms. He may also have alerted Soviet leaders that the ICP's prospects would be endangered if the Baath position was weakened as a result of failure against the Kurds.

The constant Iraqi pressure led Moscow to send Army Chief of Staff and Deputy Minister Viktor Kulikov to Baghdad on November 27 to assess the situation firsthand. The trip followed on the heels of a state visit to the

Soviet Union by the shah (November 18 to 23), during which the Iraqi-Iranian situation had been discussed. Less than two months later, Beirut newspapers reported that Iraq and the Soviet Union had concluded their largest arms agreement to date. 79/ What decided the issue for Moscow is not known: whether the breakdown in December of secret Iraqi-Iranian talks in Istanbul, the downing of two Soviet aircraft by Iranian missiles supplied by the United States, 80/ the growing strain on the capability of the Baath, which was forced to call up reserve officers in their midthirties to continue the campaign, or the indications that covert U.S. support was sustaining the Kurdish revolt. 81/ However, on January 13, 1975, a few days before the arms agreement was reported to have been signed, an article in Pravda accused the CIA, in cooperation with Israel, of having stirred up the Kurdish revolt, strongly implying that Moscow was disturbed by the American attempt to undermine a Soviet client through regional proxies. 82/ Whatever the considerations that weighed most heavily with Moscow, the buildup of Iraqi armed forces proceeded quickly and included, among other things, improved artillery of all calibers, SCUD missiles, MIGs, and additional Soviet advisers. 83/ Soviet shipments resulted in a noticeable increase in Iraqi military capability by late spring 84/ and, combined with the sorties by Soviet-piloted MIG-23 aircraft, played a crucial role in the settlement reached between Saddam Hussein and the shah on March 5, 1975. Apparently, the expanded Soviet involvement had made the shah uneasy about the consequences of a protracted conflict and amenable to a settlement in which the Kurds were the dispensable pawns.

The View from Teheran

The Iraqi-Iranian settlement, which took place at a meeting of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries in Algiers, transformed the political environment and doomed the Kurdish revolt. Although the Kurds were not specifically mentioned in the communique issued by Saddam Hussein and the shah on March 6, 1975, the reference to the restoration of "security and mutual confidence along their joint borders" and the maintenance by both sides of "strict and effective control over their joint borders in order to put a final end to all subversive infiltration from either side" meant that the Kurds could no longer obtain Iranian arms or sanctuary. 85/ The shah made peace, abandoning the Kurds, because he obtained desired border adjustments (especially of the Shatt al-Arab River) and an end to anti-Iranian activity on Iraqi territory, and because he was concerned about the growing Soviet involvement. 86/ During his visit to the USSR in November 1974, he had heard Soviet President Nikolai Podgorny declare, "We must say outright that the tension existing in relations between Iran and Iraq is not in the interests of peace," and call for a settlement by the parties themselves. To this the shah had replied: "I would only observe that if in its relations with us Iraq will adopt the same position which you, our great neighbor, observe in your relations with us, and will refrain from following with such addiction the legacy of British imperialism, there will be no problem between us in this matter." 87/ In the fighting in late 1974 and early 1975, Iran had provided a much-needed boost to the Kurds and stymied the Baath offensive. But this had resulted in stepped-up Soviet arms deliveries and involvement that were especially

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Worrying because the delivery of SCUD missiles and MIG-23s--both handled by Soviet crews--seemed to the shah more a potential threat to Iran than an element in the campaign against the Kurds.<sup>88/</sup> This heightened the shah's uneasiness, so that when the Baath agreed to settle the Iraqi-Iranian dispute on terms favorable to Iran, he seized the opportunity.

#### Outcomes

Moscow was pleased by the Iraqi-Iranian agreement. A month earlier it had noted with concern the seriousness of the border clashes and, reminding the shah of Podgorny's comment the previous November, had urged a peaceful settlement.<sup>89/</sup> The Baath had solidified its internal position as a result of timely Soviet support, and prospects for Soviet-Iraqi relations seemed bright. Iraq would still require Soviet weapons, thus providing Moscow with needed hard currency though its leverage with a less dependent client was reduced. The far-reaching character of the agreement may have come as something of a surprise, but without doubt it was Moscow's willingness to back the Baath that had, in great measure, been responsible for its advantageous outcome. The elimination of territorial and political irritants from the Iraqi-Iranian relationship meant that Moscow, not having to take sides with one against the other in an armed conflict, could proceed with its policy of improving relations with both countries.

Though the superpowers have long-term interests in the Persian Gulf, their rivalry has so far only marginally affected the policies of the local actors. What was new for the area in the 1974-75 Kurdish affair, and what is of possible significance for the future, was the crucial role that the Soviet Union played in inducing the countries--each of which looked to a



different superpower for backing--to settle their differences rather than risk an escalation that might lead them to seek intervention by superpower patrons. Escalation of the local conflict would certainly have intensified the superpowers' rivalry in the region, which, in turn, would have limited the local actors independence of action and wrought major changes in the region's political-strategic character.

Since the incident, Soviet relations with Iraq have been far from close; indeed, since early 1978 they have deteriorated noticeably. Moscow's vital security interests are only minimally involved in the area, and its main political relationship is still with Iraq. It remains Iraq's principal arms supplier (for cash) and is likely to continue so for the foreseeable future. Nevertheless, the Baath has a policy of diversification and makes large arms purchases from France, much to Moscow's annoyance.<sup>90/</sup>

Soviet naval vessels may call regularly at Umm Qasr but have to obtain permission for each port visit; and although Soviet aircraft en route to Aden (where arms were transhipped to Ethiopia) were permitted to refuel in Baghdad, this convenience was interrupted in the spring of 1978 because of policy differences over Eritrea--hardly a solid base for projecting power or influence in the gulf. In short there is no Soviet military presence in Iraq that can be described as in a privileged position. If anything, the Baath has kept its political and military distance from Moscow and gone its own way in the Arab-Israeli conflict, Arab world affairs, and the Horn of Africa, where it supports the Eritrean separatists and the Somalis against the Soviet-backed Ethiopian regime. Moscow shows the flag with its port visits to convey its political interest in, and capability for, helping client states. Thus far, however, these visits have been mainly symbolic;

they have not required the United States to do anything more than maintain its minor presence at the Jubair facility on Bahrain. Despite its important economic ties with Iraq, Moscow is less than pleased at seeing Iraq's enormous oil wealth being exchanged for Western technology and equipment. Iraqi Communists, though represented in the Baath government, are carefully circumscribed. Moscow must also be upset by the growing strain that developed when the Soviet embassy in Baghdad was forced to relocate because of Iraqi suspicion of Soviet electronic eavesdropping on official deliberations in government buildings and when twenty-one Iraqi Communists were executed for setting up party cells in the army. 91/ None of this augurs well for future Soviet-Iraqi relations.

Had Moscow not helped the Baath, its position would probably have been much less favorable: a weakened Baath might have cracked down on the ICP, or worse still, it might have been deposed and replaced by a Western-oriented regime. If Iran had been allowed to turn the tide in favor of the Kurds, an American-supported client would have humbled a Soviet one, which would have been galling to Moscow. As matters turned out, Moscow has been able to pursue a political, economic, and military relationship with Iraq and at the same time maintain an improving economic relationship with Iran.

Conclusion

When assessing the political utility of the Soviet use of armed forces, it is important not to impute to Soviet leaders yardsticks of success and failure that seem reasonable or compelling to us; for in diplomacy the success of a policy inheres not only in palpable increments but also in the value the party involved attributes to the overall consequences of its policy. Of the latter precious little is known. Given Moscow's far-ranging and increasingly determined pursuit of a number of simultaneous objectives in the Arab East-- from undermining pro-Western governments and the position of the West to securing a presence for itself, promoting the noncapitalist path of development, and aspiring to the formerly British role of arbiter of regional conflicts--its use of military force was a logical extension of the foreign aid that initiated and sustained its developing relations with the courted Arab countries. In each of the cases examined, the Soviet Union expected that committing its armed forces to an objective that was important to the client would result in closer ties. And in the short run that is what happened. If relations later soured or failed to live up to Soviet expectations because of unanticipated and unforeseeable developments over which Moscow had no control, that is not reason enough to fault the policy it followed.

In all three cases, there appear to be a number of similarities in the Soviet use of armed forces as a political instrument. First,

the USSR supported the legitimate government of a nation-state and acted in defense of national sovereignty and territorial integrity. Each of the three governments--Egypt, Sudan, and Iraq--faced, in varying degrees, a major crisis that threatened its stability and prospective tenure in office and saw in Soviet military support a means to surmount its difficulty. Second, the Soviet Union did not initiate the offers but acted in response to requests for military support and for the Soviet personnel needed for the effective use of Soviet armaments. Though Moscow did not offer Soviet combat forces, it was not reluctant to supply them, presumably anticipating additional political advantage and the influence assumed to flow therefrom. Third, the Soviet government provided the arms and advisers on a government-to-government basis. The arrangements were made through regular diplomatic channels and touched on all aspects of the relationship, from the signing of the agreements through the scheduling of deliveries to the use of the assistance provided.

Fourth, notwithstanding their military character, the three recipient governments were deemed to be "progressive", an imprimatur bestowed primarily because of their policy of opposing "imperialism" (the United States), not because of their internal reforms or platforms. Perhaps some weight was given to their professed commitment to "socialism," but pragmatism, not doctrine, shaped Soviet relationships with them. However, to bring ideological formulations into approximate concordance with Soviet support of certain regimes and with evolving political and socio-economic phenomena in the third world milieu,

Soviet analysts did devote considerable attention to detailed elaborations on the character of the "class struggle" in developing countries.

Fifth, the deployment of armed forces was necessary to maintain Moscow's credibility as a patron. If it was marginal in the Sudan and quite important in Iraq, it was essential in Egypt. Without it Moscow could not have hoped to fashion a special relationship or to receive military privileges. Refusal would have jeopardized--certainly in the case of Egypt and possibly of Iraq--the very existence of regimes favorably disposed toward the Soviet Union and would have discouraged prospective clients from turning to Moscow. Whether interpreted as a lack of capability, a reluctance to engage in protracted and costly rivalry with the United States, or a sign of political diffidence, refusal would undoubtedly have doomed Soviet ambitions in the Arab East and left the field to the United States. In the case of Egypt, Moscow demonstrated that it was prepared to go to hitherto uncharted lengths to protect its client from defeat, including a crisis with its global adversary. Because of Soviet actions in 1970, the United States should not have been surprised by what Moscow did in October 1973 in the Middle East, and later in Angola and the Horn of Africa.

Sixth, Moscow was not lavish or indiscriminate in its largesse. Each time, the armed forces committed by Moscow were appropriate to the threat facing the client; they were prudently deployed to achieve limited military-political ends without unnecessarily alarming the

United States or precipitating a superpower confrontation; overall, they were satisfactory to the client; and they were effective (in Egypt and Iraq) in signaling the adversaries of Moscow's client states to reconsider the implications of their behavior. In all three instances, Soviet actions avoided military overkill and showed a keen appreciation of the local situation and of the regional and global implications of the involvement.

Seventh, in all three cases, air defense and air power were the most effective types of military assistance rendered by the Soviet Union.

Finally, the USSR took care, generally speaking, to send, maintain, and use its armed forces in accordance with the client's wishes and without making the indigenous leaders fearful of domestic meddling. The task set was discreetly accomplished or facilitated, with minimum publicity and internal dislocation, and with no attempt to blackmail the client for concessions.

Comparative analysis also highlights the USSR's ability to respond flexibly and to graduate its assistance according to the needs and potentialities of different situations. First, in Egypt, where the Soviet Union showed a willingness to lend military support to a client enmeshed in a major interstate conflict, it made a major commitment of combat forces upwards of 20,000 men, including pilots, missile and radar operators, and a full logistical complement. By contrast, in Sudan and Iraq, where the Soviet Union responded to insurgencies directed against its clients, the numbers were small, the equipment manned by Soviet troops was highly restricted, and the

circumstances of their use were such that Soviet personnel were seldom in serious danger. The great disparity in force levels and combat participation make the Egyptian case qualitatively different.

Second, the inequalities in forces committed was in proportion to the political stakes involved. Egypt, the most important target of Soviet strategy in the Arab East, was being fiercely battered by Israeli airpower. An immediate, large rescue operation was essential to secure the prime Arab client and to safeguard the strategic advantages already realized in Egypt. By contrast, the situations in Sudan and Iraq were less alarming. Neither regime was threatened by a pro-Western rival or apt to turn away from Moscow should assistance be denied, but each was being internally challenged by a fractious minority that was supported, however circuitously, by pro-Western forces intent on weakening an anti-Western Arab state. Moscow's response was to assist the soliciting government.

Third, only in the case of Egypt did the Soviet-American relationship significantly and unmistakably enter the picture. The Soviet government committed its armed forces not only to protect a beleaguered client, but also to signal the United States that it would not tolerate the defeat of its client at the hands of a U.S.-backed adversary. Undoubtedly this was intended to nudge the United States into taking steps to restrain Israel more than it had. In Iraq, on the other hand, the Baath was not threatened from without nor was a

superpower clash of interests directly at issue, though behind the moves of the Soviet Union and the United States was a web of tangential geostrategic considerations. In Sudan there was no superpower competition of any consequence, and Soviet forces played a minimal role throughout.

Fourth, the regional context of each of the three cases was quite different. In Sudan and Iraq developments unfolded without relation to the Arab-Israeli conflict, though marginal Israeli connections could be adduced from aid given the Anyanyas through Uganda and Ethiopia, and from the transshipment to the Kurdish rebels via Iran of Soviet arms captured in the June War. The crisis in Sudan stemmed from Black African causes--racial, religious, and cultural. Events in Iraq bore on Iraqi-Iranian relations, on the stability of the Baath, and on incipient superpower rivalry in the Gulf. By contrast, the crisis in Egypt was a direct outgrowth of the Arab-Israeli conflict, which after the June War put the Soviet Union fully on the Arab side and brought it into open military rivalry with the United States in the Arab East. There may well be a long-term strategy underlying Moscow's behavior, but the specific responses of the Kremlin in these three cases were shaped by each crisis itself and not by any discernible linkage between them. Finally, whereas Moscow's decision to help Sudan and Iraq may have been made with some consideration of the brightening prospects of local Communists, that factor never entered into the Egyptian case.



It has been said of Middle Eastern politics that nothing fails like success. To paraphrase another epigram, the road to political disaffection is paved with good deeds. In pursuit of regional objectives and in support of progressive Arab governments, Moscow used its military power well, showing its understanding of the specific circumstances of each crisis and the realities of the Soviet-American relationship. The Soviet armed forces helped Egypt and Iraq to achieve their desired outcomes and to frustrate the bid of U.S. proteges for local advantage. In all three cases, they helped pave the way for further Soviet penetration. Yet for all that, they could not prevent abrupt political turnabouts. They could help courted countries but not secure Soviet influence. In third world settings, there is no safeguard against the unanticipated by-products of complex domestic and regional interplay, short of the colonial-style occupation that is counterproductive in today's international system. Changes of leadership and policy in developing countries can undo overnight the most elaborately planned Soviet presence.

In the Arab East, Soviet leaders relearned what they had first found out in Indonesia in 1965 and Ghana in 1966; namely, that they could help a third world country achieve certain objectives and themselves benefit in several ways from an expanded presence in the country and from changes in the configuration of power in the region, but that their ability to manipulate the country's internal or foreign policy was limited. Nor were they able to wield influence commensurate with the amount of aid rendered or the size of their armed

forces in the country. The scope for initiative or leverage was proscribed because the Soviet leadership was unable to project power directly and fully into the political system of the target country.

Moscow has also learned that any policy depending for its success on the exercise of direct influence is bound to meet difficulty, frustration, and probably failure. There is a point beyond which Soviet influence cannot consolidate without occasioning a countervailing resistance from the United States, from the target itself, or from the region as a whole. A strong Soviet position in one country can adversely affect Soviet relations with that country's rival. Thus, when the Russians seemed to be entrenching themselves in Iraq, their relations with Iran cooled; and when relations with Iran showed improvement, Iraq grew suspicious. The area's internal rivalries restrict the Soviet Union's ability to develop lasting, close relationships.

The Soviet Union showed great skill in the exercise of influence over Middle Eastern protagonists in the Iraqi crisis. It used a limited display of military force to forestall a possible regional conflict without alienating either party — each of which it wanted to cultivate — while still facilitating the domestic objective of its Baathist client. This was an expression of superpower influence in its most sophisticated form. It demonstrated that Moscow knew how to restrain the behavior of a client state and the state's adversary through the deliberate and limited use of its armed forces. If there is a lesson to be learned from this experience it is that a superpower can restrain behavior more easily than it

can compel action. But even the ability to restrain cannot be counted on, since the conditions of a given situation may limit the patron's ability to bring its power to bear in an effective way.

Strategic, military, and political considerations pertaining to Soviet national ambitions in the Arab East and global rivalry with the United States, as in the case of Egypt, may be a sufficiently accurate explanation of the Soviet decision to furnish armed forces. Nonetheless, Moscow's inclination to be slightly more solicitous and responsive to the wishes of Arab clients when their Communist parties are permitted to benefit from the "progressive" course of internal transformation, as in the case of Sudan and Iraq, should not be ruled out. Ideology may not be an imperative of Soviet foreign policy, but neither is it always an irrelevancy.

Moscow has learned to live with "failure," to accept the limits of its influence, and to recognize that constraints and disadvantages are concomitants of initiatives and benefits. The period of the early establishment of a presence and accumulation of privileged positions having passed, Moscow now finds that future gains are costly, difficult, uncertain, and limited. The more it becomes involved, the more it tries to exercise influence over beneficiaries and clients, the more it arouses nationalist resentment and resistance. Moscow knows this. Yet recent Soviet behavior

indicates there is no wavering from the forward policy adopted in the mid-1950s. The leadership may have realized that influence-building in the Arab world is an arduous business, but it continues to give support and to do so on a substantial scale, convinced that it can benefit from the consequences of some Arab policies, a spin-off of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the pressure of Arab oil policy on the West, or the various subregional conflicts in the area.

Moscow persists, apparently encouraged by what it perceives to be gradual improvements in its overall position. Whether rationalization or strategic need motivates its willingness to stay the course and to place local setbacks in a broader and longer-term perspective is indisputable, and it is also an unambiguous political statement.

If accurate, the foregoing has a number of implications for future U.S. foreign and defense policy and behavior. First, interest in the Middle East must be viewed as a permanent feature of Soviet foreign policy. Reflecting more than Moscow's understandable concern about the security of its southern flank, this interest encompasses the entire Arab world and constitutes an extension of the U.S.-Soviet adversary relationship in Europe and the Far East. For reasons that have proved compelling to a generation of Soviet leaders, the Arab East is conceived of as a vast strategic preserve in which the potential returns are believed to warrant a sustained, intensive pattern of interaction. Despite setbacks, disappointments, and irritations, Moscow considers the changes in the Middle East, whose evolution it has helped shape since its involvement in the mid-1950s,

to have been generally propitious for the advancement of Soviet aims. However limited its present position in most parts of the Arab world and however little influence it wields in the formulation of policy in client states, the Soviet Union is committed to a policy marked by persistence of purpose and breadth of scope.

Second, the Soviet Union has demonstrated its ability to undertake military operations in the third world. What cannot be doubted any longer is its willingness to use its armed forces to support clients in the Arab East against external attack, against internal opposition that is aided from outside and against pressure from a pro-Western regional rival. Since the June War, the USSR has poured an enormous amount of weaponry into the Middle East, not only to help its clients defend themselves, but also to enable them to pursue policy objectives detrimental to U.S. interests. Much attention has been devoted by Western analysts to the impressive buildup of the Soviet navy, yet Soviet air power, air defense systems, armor, and artillery have overshadowed the naval dimension of Soviet military power and posed the major threat to Western interests in the Arab East. Any projection of Soviet force capabilities must recognize their balanced, multipurpose character. The Soviet Union possesses the military wherewithal to affect the outcome of any regional conflict in which it assists its clients.

Third, the Soviet Union's use of armed forces in pursuit of political objectives in the Arab world has been carefully managed.

Though not reluctant to defend the security of a client state, Moscow has been sensitive to U.S. attitudes and interests. Each of the cases examined demonstrates its readiness to safeguard the domestic stability of a courted regime; that is, the Soviet Union has sought merely to preserve or consolidate the position of the government already in power. The remaining question is whether, and to what extent, the Soviet leadership is prepared to commit armed forces to help bring about major changes in regional alignments or to promote a client's objectives beyond the existing military or territorial situation.

Fourth, there is a very limited sample for evaluating the combat effectiveness of the Soviet forces that might be deployed in a Middle East conflict. Judging by their performance in Egypt in 1970-- the only one of the three countries that engaged large numbers of Soviet troops in combat conditions--Soviet equipment and personnel acquitted themselves creditably. It is wise to expect that Soviet military forces will carry out effectively whatever tasks are assigned them in any future Middle East operation. An Arab client fully assisted by the Soviet Union would be a formidable adversary.

Fifth, the Soviet-American rivalry in the Middle East is a multifaceted struggle in which the military component is only one variable, though an important one. No single local battle or war is going to be decisive. Soviet power is not poised to swoop down on the area and incorporate large chunks of real estate into the Soviet imperial system. Like the United States, the Soviet Union covets

influence, not territory. The superpowers are likely to find themselves engaged in an endless series of indeterminate mini-conflicts of varying intensity, apt to spawn sudden upheavals and mercurial political shifts that may give one or the other superpower some temporary local advantages. But since their struggle in the Arab world is not always a zero-sum situation, as events in Iraq in 1974-75 clearly indicated, the United States need not always react to seeming Soviet advances or exaggerate Moscow's ability to bend a dependent client to its will. Dependency is not synonymous with helplessness. The Soviet (and American) experience in the third world has repeatedly shown that neither aid nor military privileges necessarily bring a superpower influence and advantage when these are most desired. A military presence that is not institutionalized and that can be peremptorily terminated will not assure the political foothold without which no imperial policy is possible. In thinking about politics and alignments in the Arab East, one must remember that superpower behavior and ambition are confined by the uncertainty, the narrow range of feasible options, and the latent fickleness of local leaders that are the salient features of the regional landscape.

Sixth, the nuclear relationship between the superpowers operates on an entirely different plane from their rivalry in third world regions such as the Middle East. It imposes firm restraints and changes very slowly, since no technological breakthrough affecting the "essential equivalence" of their deterrent capability is likely.

But it may be influenced by tension at the substrategic level.

Thus the Soviet military involvement in Egypt in 1970 complicated efforts to limit nuclear delivery systems and reach agreement on a series of other issues. The reduction of tension in the Middle East in 1972 and up to the October War made SALT I and far-reaching economic and technical agreements possible; whereas the serious friction in the Middle East and Black Africa since late 1973 have made the process of negotiating new agreements troublesome.

Finally, since there is no anticipating the periodic eruptions in the Arab world, U.S. policy must be capable of responding promptly and effectively to specific crisis situations. Soviet leverage came from a readiness to exploit concrete opportunities and not from any prepackaged design for expansion. It was exercised effectively from a position of growing military strength. Any successful policy toward a region so important to the stability and unity of the Western world requires a strong military capability, informed assessments, consensus on policy objectives, and a large amount of luck.



Footnotes

1. Lawrence L. Whetten, The Canal War: Four Power Conflict in the Middle East (MIT Press, 1974), p. 398.
2. International Institute for Strategic Studies, Strategic Survey, 1967 (London: IISS, 1968), p. 37.
3. Christian Duevel, "The Political Code of N.G. Yegorychev," Radio Liberty Research Paper, no. 17 (1967), and Duevel, "Soviet Party Press Attacks Left Opposition," Radio Liberty Dispatch (August 25, 1967). John R. Thomas argues that Yegorychev "apparently advocated direct involvement" in the June War; see "Soviet Foreign Policy and the Military," Survey, vol. 17 (Summer 1971), pp. 147-53.
4. Mohamed Heikal, The Road to Ramadan (London: Collins, 1975), pp. 51-52.
5. Alvin Z. Rubinstein, Red Star on the Nile: The Soviet-Egyptian Influence Relationship Since the June War (Princeton University Press, 1977), p. 63.
6. Ibid., p. 105.
7. Heikal, Road to Ramadan, p. 48.
8. Ibid., p. 88.
9. Ibid., pp. 87-88.
10. Roger F. Pajak, "Soviet Arms and Egypt," Survival, vol. 17 (July-August 1975), p. 167.
11. Ibid.
12. International Institute for Strategic Studies, Strategic Survey, 1970 (London: IISS, 1971), p. 47.

13. BBC Monitoring Service, Summary of World Broadcasts, ME/3336/A/8, March 23, 1970.
14. New York Times, April 2, 1970.
15. J. C. Hurewitz, "Weapons Acquisition: Israel and Egypt," in Frank B. Horton III, Anthony C. Rogerson, and Edward L. Warner III, eds., Comparative Defense Policy (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), p. 489.
16. New York Times, April 29, 1970.
17. Jon D. Glassman, Arms for the Arabs: The Soviet Union and War in the Middle East (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), p. 78.
18. Ibid., p. 79.
19. New York Times, July 7, 1970.
20. Middle East Record, Volume Five: 1969-1970 (Jerusalem: Keter, 1977), p. 16.
21. Glassman, Arms for the Arabs, p. 81.
22. Pravda, January 27, 1970.
23. Arab Report and Record (March 1-15, 1970), p. 167.
24. Soviet News, February 7, 1970.
25. Pravda, February 17, 1970, as translated in Current Digest of the Soviet Press (CDSP), vol. 22, no. 7 (March 17, 1970), p. 10.
26. William B. Quandt, Decade of Decisions: American Policy Toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1967-1976 (University of California Press, 1977), p. 95.
27. See J. C. Hurewitz, "Superpower Rivalry and the Arab-Israeli Dispute: Involvement or Commitment?" in M. Confino and S. Shamir, eds., The U.S.S.R. and the Middle East (Wiley, 1973), p. 160; and Glassman, Arms for the Arabs, p. 85.

28. New York Times, April 15, 1970.
29. Pravda, May 5, 1970.
30. New York Times, May 21 and 22, 1970.
31. Lawrence Whetten analyzes this affair in illuminating detail;  
Canal War, pp. 117-28.
32. Ibid., p. 127.
33. Ibid., pp. 127-28.
34. IISS, Strategic Survey, 1970, p. 48.
35. Hurewitz, "Weapons Acquisition," p. 491.
36. Ibid., pp. 490-91; Glassman, Arms for the Arabs, pp. 105-06.
37. In the summer of 1973 the Egyptian air defense system consisted of "130 SAM sites, each of 6 SA-2, SA-3 and some SA-6 launchers; 20mm, 23mm, 37mm, 57mm, 85mm and 100mm AA guns; all integrated, through a warning and command network, with 9 Air Force squadrons of MIG-21MF interceptors." International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance, 1973-1974 (London: IISS, 1974), p. 32.
38. BBC Monitoring Service, Summary of World Broadcasts, ME/3296/  
A/1, February 4, 1970.
39. Ibid., ME/3302/A/1-4, February 11, 1970.
40. Quandt, Decade of Decisions, p. 97.
41. Ibid.
42. BBC Monitoring Service, Summary of World Broadcasts, ME/3336/  
A/3, March 23, 1970.
43. Rubinstein, Red Star on the Nile, pp. 118-21.

44. Later, on July 4, President Nixon also quietly "authorized the shipment of electronic-counter-measure (ECM) equipment to be used against the SAMs in the canal zone." Quandt, Decade of Decisions, pp. 99-101.
45. Michael Brecher, Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy (Yale University Press, 1975), p. 491. Chapter 8 gives a detailed account of the Israeli reaction to the Rogers proposals.
46. New York Times, July 29, 1970.
47. New York Times, July 2, 1970.
48. A recent analysis suggests that, since it had no comparable naval facilities elsewhere in the Mediterranean, losing the Egyptian shore-based facilities led the Soviet Union to reduce the number of surface combatants deployed in the Mediterranean and, possibly, to increase the number of submarines deployed. See Robert G. Weinland, "Land Support for Naval Forces: Egypt and the Soviet Escadra, 1962-1976," Survival (London), vol. 20 (March-April 1978), pp. 78-79.
49. Middle East Record, Volume Three: 1967 (Jerusalem: Keter, 1971), p. 56.
50. Pravda, October 30, 1967.
51. Middle East Record, Volume Four: 1968 (Jerusalem: Keter, 1973), p. 56.
52. Haim Shaked, Esther Souery, and Gabriel Warburg, "The Communist Party in the Sudan, 1946-1971," in Confino and Shamir, The U.S.S.R. and the Middle East, p. 353.

53. Pravda, May 28, June 1 and 2, 1969.
54. Robert O. Collins, The Southern Sudan in Historical Perspective (Tel Aviv: Shiloh Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, 1975).
55. Izvestiya, June 12, 1969; Pravda, June 28 and July 18, 1969.  
See also Malumud Ata Alla, Arab Struggle for Economic Independence (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1974), pp. 142-43, 148-49.
56. Peter K. Bechtold, Politics in the Sudan (Praeger, 1976), p. 263. See also Eric Rouleau, "Sudan: A Putsch With a Popular Front," Le Monde Weekly Selection (September 10, 1969), p. 4.
57. Izvestiya, August 29, 1969.
58. Pravda, November 5, 1969, as translated in CDSP, vol. 21, no. 45 (December 3, 1969), pp. 23-24.
59. The lower estimate is cited in U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Communist States and Developing Countries: Aid and Trade in 1971 (Government Printing Office, 1972), p. 18; the higher estimate in The Almanac of World Military Power, 2d ed. (Bowker, 1972), p. 260.

The figures on Soviet force levels and equipment in the Sudan during the 1969-71 period have been culled from various sources: International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance and Strategic Survey; Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers; Stockholm International Peace Research Institute publications on disarmament and arms transfers; Arab Report and Record; and the references noted above.

60. Central Intelligence Agency, Communist Aid to the Less Developed Countries of the Free World, 1976, ER 77-10296 (CIA, 1977), p. 6.
61. Middle East Record, Volume Five, p. 1095.
62. The split between Mahgoub and his associates was caused by the latter's belief that the SCP be dissolved as the price of playing a leading role in Nimeiry's Sudanese Socialist Union. Mahgoub believed the party should retain its independent existence and moved to form alliances with the banned anti-Nimeiry religious Umma party and coalition National Front party. The role of the Communists in the Sudan is treated in considerable detail in the first scholarly treatment of the subject in the English language: Gabriel A. Warburg, Islam, Nationalism and Communism in a Traditional Society: The Case of Sudan (London: Frank Cass, 1978).
63. Shaked and others, "Communist Party in the Sudan," p. 359.
64. Ibid. Warburg, Islam, Nationalism and Communism, believes that the coup was motivated by Hashim al-Ata's desire to bring about a settlement of the southern problem. The coup failed for a number of reasons: the interventionary role of Egyptian troops stationed at the Egyptian Military College in Gabal Awlia and the Egyptian air base in Wadi-Seidna, outside Khartoum; the role of Egypt, Libya, and British intelligence; the lack of leaders; and the failure of al-Ata to execute Nimeiry and his aides.
65. Nimeiry's Defense Minister Khalid Hassan Abbas, who was in Yugoslavia at the time of the attempted coup, flew to Cairo.

There, according to the story reconstructed by a Swiss journalist from the writings of a well-informed Lebanese journalist, Fuad Matar, Abbas conferred with Egyptian leaders and went on to Tripoli. "From there he called on the Sudanese by Libyan radio to rise against the coup. The countercoup took place on July 23, executed by tanks that appear to have come from the officers' academy established by the Egyptians at Jebel al-Awliya near Khartoum. Some sources affirmed that the tanks were driven by Egyptian officers. Another story was that a part of the Sudanese brigade stationed on the Suez Canal was flown to Khartoum. These troops seem in fact to have been moved, but it was tanks, not infantry, which liquidated the coup of al-Ata." Arnold Hottinger, "The Great Powers and the Middle East," in William E. Griffith, ed., The World and Great-Power Triangles (MIT Press, 1975), p. 135.

66. Bechtold, Politics in the Sudan, p. 270.
67. Rouhollah K. Ramazani, Iran's Foreign Policy, 1941-1972 (University Press of Virginia, 1975), pp. 315-16.
68. Jan F. Triska and Robert M. Slusser, The Theory, Law, and Policy of Soviet Treaties (Stanford University Press, 1962), p. 282.
69. Oles M. Smolansky, The Soviet Union and the Arab East Under Khrushchev (Facknell University Press, 1974), p. 187. Professor Smolansky's treatment of this period and problem is the best available in the English language.

70. Jean Riollet, "Moscow Worries About Political Stability in Iraq," Radio Liberty Dispatch, January 23, 1974.
71. Paul Kinsinger, "Arms Purchases in the Persian Gulf: The Military Dimension," in The Persian Gulf, 1975: The Continuing Debate on Arms Sales, Hearings before the Special Subcommittee on Investigations of the House Committee on International Relations, 94 Cong. 1 sess. (GPO, 1976), p. 242. See also Roger F. Pajak, "Soviet Military Aid to Iraq and Syria," Strategic Review, vol. 4 (Winter 1976), pp. 53-54.
72. Middle East Intelligence Survey, vol. 2 (June 15, 1974), p. 48.
73. Arnold Hottinger, "A New Kurdish Insurrection," Swiss Review of World Affairs, vol. 24 (June 1974), p. 13.
74. New York Times, October 3, 1973.
75. International Herald Tribune, October 7, 1974.
76. Observer Review (London), November 3, 1974.
77. CDSP, vol. 26, no. 30 (August 21, 1974), p. 7.
78. CDSP, vol. 26, no. 44 (November 27, 1974), p. 19.
79. Washington Post, January 21, 1975.
80. Arab Report and Record (December 16-31, 1974), p. 576.
81. The covert American role was originally exposed in a leak to the press of a secret report prepared by the House Select Committee on Intelligence, which was chaired by Representative Otis Fike. See The Village Voice, Special Supplement, February 16, 1976. See also William Safire, New York Times, December 19, 1977.



82. CDSF, vol. 27, no. 2 (February 5, 1975), p. 17.
83. Washington Post, February 1, 1975. Jim Hoagland also reported that "at least one Soviet Colonel is known to have been killed in combat with the Iraqis against the Kurds, according to sources in touch with Kurdish intelligence."
84. The new Soviet arms enabled the Iraqi army to expand from two to three armored divisions, to add an infantry division, and to strengthen antiaircraft defense greatly. The air force increased by about 10 percent. This assessment is based on a comparison of the data given in International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance, 1974-1975 (London: IISS, 1974), pp. 33-34, and IISS, The Military Balance, 1975-1976 (IISS, 1975), pp. 34, 90.
85. The agreement also reestablished the border along "the Thalweg line in the middle of the deepest shipping channel in the Shatt al-Arab estuary" (where it had been before 1936) and settled the border through a disputed oil field. Arab Report and Record (March 1-15, 1975), p. 163. For details of the Iraqis final offensive against the Kurds, see The Economist (March 15, 1975), p. 58.
86. Under a British-sponsored treaty in 1937, the Iraqi border with Iran was set along the eastern bank of the Shatt al-Arab, giving Iraq virtual control over the river and access to Iran's largest oil refinery at Abadan.
87. Quoted in USSR and Third World, vol. 4 (July and August 1974), pp. 466-67.

88. Kinsinger, "Arms Purchases," p. 244.
89. Pravda, February 2, 1975.
90. Washington Post, February 27, 1978.
91. Washington Post, June 8, 1978; New York Times, June 11, 1978.

## Chapter 12

NAVAL DIPLOMACY IN WEST AFRICAN WATERS

By David K. Hall\*

In February 1969 and again in December 1970, the Soviet Union deployed warships to West African waters -- the first and second such appearances of Soviet naval power in this region of the world. The first was in response to Ghana's seizure of two Russian fishing trawlers in October 1968 in its territorial waters and subsequent refusal to release the ships and crew because of their suspected complicity in subversive activities designed to restore to power Ghana's former president, Kwame Nkrumah. After four months of unsuccessful diplomatic and economic pressure by the USSR to secure the trawlers' release, Moscow dispatched four naval vessels from the Mediterranean Sea into the Gulf of Guinea near Ghana. On March 3, with the Soviet ships in the area, the Ghanaians released the trawlers and most of the Russian seamen. On March 4, the Soviet naval contingent left the Gulf of Guinea for a port visit to Lagos, Nigeria, only to return again on March 11. On March 19, the last three Soviet seamen were released and the naval combatants returned to their Mediterranean fleet. This little-known incident exemplified both the expanding capability of the Soviet navy to project power into geographical areas far removed from the traditional sphere of Russian influence and an increasing willingness on the Soviet Union's part to employ coercive military threats, despite their accompanying risks, in defense of such state interests as Russian seamen and property.

The second appearance of Soviet naval vessels in West African waters occurred in early December 1970, after Portugal had launched a small amphibious attack on Conakry, Guinea, from its African colony of Portuguese

Guinea. The objectives of this seaborne attack by some 350 soldiers were to overthrow the government of President Sekou Toure and assassinate the leaders of the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC), a highly successful national liberation movement dedicated to ending Portugal's five centuries of colonial rule in Portuguese Guinea. Since 1960 Toure had permitted the PAIGC to openly operate its revolutionary schools and international information activities from the safety of Conakry, and had allowed PAIGC guerrillas to use Guinea as a sanctuary from the colonial army in neighboring Portuguese Guinea.

In response to a personal appeal from President Toure for military defense against future Portuguese attacks, the Soviet Union dispatched a group of naval combatants to the waters of Portuguese Guinea to deter similar invasions. From this initial mission of the West Africa Patrol, as it came to be called in the United States, other Soviet missions in the region soon followed. Soviet combatants were used to deter and defend against internal unrest in Guinea, to cultivate political influence with other West African states, to expand the military facilities made available to the USSR in Guinea, and to watch the movement of NATO ships in the Atlantic Ocean. Not only did the creation of the West Africa Patrol indicate an increased Soviet willingness to assume some military risks against a member of NATO (Portugal), but subsequent Soviet military activities in and near Guinea demonstrated how an initial military deployment could serve additional political and strategic objectives.

Ghana, 1968-1969

On October 10, 1968, two Russian fishing trawlers whose crews numbered fifty-two men were forcibly taken into custody by the Ghanaian navy just inside Ghana's twelve-mile territorial limit. While the seizure might have been expected to be resolved quickly by the two governments, the event became instead one of symbolic importance to both sides and precipitated a five-month dispute.

Soviet Behavior

Although several analysts of the trawler incident have ascribed the naval action taken by the USSR in early 1969 to the importance of protecting Russian seamen and property, this does not fully explain the Soviet response.<sup>1/</sup> McCWire has argued that "the Soviet Union has established a fairly consistent record of accepting the seizure of property and the expulsion, and even loss of personnel, in the interests of longer-term foreign policy objectives."<sup>2/</sup> Moreover, the Soviet naval response to the trawler seizure did not result simply in the dispatch of ships to the vicinity of Ghana but included the first Russian port visits to any West African states -- Guinea and Nigeria. The full scope of the Russian naval action can be satisfactorily explained only when viewed in several contexts. The Soviet Union's reaction to the trawler incident was conditioned by the economic importance of its fishing industry and maritime trade, the role of maritime activity in its foreign policy, the navy's growing capability and responsibility for protecting Soviet maritime interests, and, finally, a number of its political interests at stake in West Africa in late 1968 and early 1969.

"In order to use the sea the way she does," McGwire has observed, "Russia has to rely on maritime stability and the freedom of the seas."<sup>3/</sup> Certainly the prolonged incarceration of Russian fishing trawlers by a minor African nation could be perceived in Moscow as a challenge to the maritime law and order on which the nation's fishing industry and merchant marine depended. By the late 1960s the fishing industry played a major role in Soviet economic life. It had been greatly expanded in the 1950s to help offset the chronic inadequacies of Soviet agriculture. In the decade following 1957 its size was doubled, making it the largest fleet fishing in the world. The metric tons of fish caught by the Soviet fleet quadrupled during the 1950s and 1960s. By the beginning of the 1970s about a third of the animal protein consumed in the USSR came from fish.<sup>4/</sup>

Not only did the Ghanaians' lengthy impoundment of the two trawlers present a threat to an important sector of the Soviet economy; it also struck at a significant instrument of Russian foreign policy. The fishing industry was important to Soviet relations with the developing world; Moscow used gifts of fishing vessels, man-made ports, and navigational training as an effective form of foreign aid in a hungry world. Aid of this type helped expand Soviet international trade with third world countries and frequently gave the USSR access to port facilities in the nations aided. Since technical assistance was ordinarily required for the effective transfer of new fishing industry technology, initial gifts were often followed by Soviet administrators and technicians. Access to foreign ports and foreign waters had national security implications as well, for Soviet fishing fleets working strategic areas of the globe were likely to include one or two trawlers specially fitted for intelligence work.<sup>5/</sup>

The role of maritime activity as a "state interest" affecting military planning was formally acknowledged during the late 1960s, as the growing Soviet ability to project military power abroad led to the contemplation of new missions that both necessitated and rationalized increased defense expenditures. In 1967, the commander of the Soviet navy, Admiral S. G. Gorshkov, publicly stated that "with the growth of the economic power of the Soviet Union, its interests on the seas and oceans are expanding to an ever greater degree, and consequently new requirements are laid on the Navy to defend them from imperialist encroachments."<sup>6/</sup> Two days after the Ghanaian seizure--although apparently without reference to it--another Soviet commentator observed that "the main task of Soviet ships in international waters . . . is to defend the work of the Soviet merchant marine, which today is subjected everywhere to direct provocations and attacks by aircraft and ships of some imperialist states."<sup>7/</sup>

The Soviet navy establishment may well have become sensitized to the new challenges it faced in the "prawn war," which occurred during July 1968 in the Gulf of Carpentaria between the Soviet ship Van Gogh and Australian fishermen. The Van Gogh's electronic suction gear, capable of harvesting entire prawn beds, was accused of endangering the livelihood of hundreds of Australian fishermen and resulted in partially successful efforts to block Soviet fishing in Australian waters. While the Soviet navy could not be expected to choose Australia as the first target against which to defend the sanctity of Soviet property rights and the freedom of the seas, Moscow was increasingly prepared to exert its power against less imposing antagonists.<sup>8/</sup>

The USSR's response to the trawler incident was conditioned not only by general concern about economic, foreign policy, and military matters, but also by the recent history of its involvement in Africa. Soviet policy toward Africa during the 1950s and early 1960s had been predicated on Khrushchev's optimism about African socialist development and an African foreign policy favoring the USSR in its competition with the Western powers. Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah, Guinea's Sekou Toure, and Mali's Modibo Keita proved to have policy positions quite compatible with Soviet preferences on a number of major international issues dividing the East and West, such as Algeria, the Congo, nuclear disarmament, reorganization of the UN, and the role of national liberation movements. As a result, these more radical West African leaders were given special attention and support during the Khrushchev years.<sup>9/</sup>

Soviet trade credits were extended to Ghana, Guinea, and Mali; this helped bridge the economic gap left by the discontinuation of preferential treatment by Western Europe. Russian and Eastern European technicians helped provide economic planning, management of state enterprises, and military training. Hundreds of West Africans were sent to the USSR for technical, military, and ideological training. A modest number of jet fighters, military transports, tanks, and patrol boats were transferred by Moscow to provide the rudiments of a modern armed force. In successive years, Toure, Nkrumah, and Keita were honored with the Lenin Peace Prize.<sup>10/</sup>

If the Khrushchev years were marked by the optimistic search for "African Cubas," the post-Khrushchev era was one of pragmatic adjustment to the internal weaknesses of radical clients and a broadening definition of Soviet interests



in sub-Saharan Africa. The ethnic kaleidoscope of black Africa proved poor material for the national mobilization requisite to rapid socialist development. Nkrumah and Toure emerged as erratic and repressive leaders. Falling Russian expectations helped cushion somewhat the psychological blow of Nkrumah's overthrow in February 1966--a coup that came about despite the efforts of numerous Soviet security advisers and a Soviet-trained presidential guard. "Within a week of the coup d'etat," writes Legvold,

the new regime had sent all 620 Soviet technicians and teachers packing. Their ouster removed nearly the entire staff of Ghana's medical school (25), one third of all the qualified secondary educators in mathematics and science (125), 54 advisers attached to the Ministry of Defense, 200 workers at the Tamale airbase, 47 geologists, the staff of four state farms, 27 technicians completing atomic-research facilities and technicians aiding with a variety of other projects such as a fish-processing complex, a concrete panel factory, and so on. 11/

There soon followed a series of other Ghanaian acts that added insult to the Russian injury. In March 1967 Ghana charged the Soviet Union with smuggling arms into the country on the freighter Ristna. Ghanaian medical students returning from the USSR were denied licenses on the grounds that their training was inadequate. On August 23, 1968, a Soviet plane carrying passengers from Conakry, Guinea, to Moscow intruded into Ghanaian airspace and was forced to land. Relations were further strained by Ghana's sharp criticism of the USSR's invasion of Czechoslovakia. The seizure of the Soviet trawlers on October 12 was the latest in a series of acts that infuriated Soviet officials. 12/

In the aftermath of the Nkrumah coup, Soviet theoreticians were quick to note that many of the personal weaknesses that had brought down their Ghanaian client were not fully shared by Mali's Keita. (The absence of similar observations regarding Toure reflected the perpetually troubled state of Guinean politics.) Prawda's West African correspondent emphasized that Mali's leaders had centralized power against reactionary elements, seized the initiative in economic development, and seen the importance of eliminating inefficient state enterprises.<sup>13/</sup> In fact, as Legvold says, "in the circumstances it is hard to imagine what more any African regime could have done to satisfy Soviet expectations."<sup>14/</sup>

It was therefore a cruel blow to the USSR when Keita's reign was cut short by a military coup on November 19, 1968--a month after Ghana's seizure of the Soviet trawlers. The chief African commentator for Izvestiya sadly observed that military coups "have become almost common-place phenomena in Africa" and that these events "redound to the interests of the former metropolitan country, i.e., to the interests of neocolonialism."<sup>15/</sup>

Events in Mali had the effect both of heightening the symbolic importance of the remaining "radical" leader in West Africa--Guinea's Sekou Toure--and of shifting Soviet policy in Africa further toward a pragmatic course that stressed the inherent importance of each nation rather than the ideological purity of regime policy. While Soviet relations with Guinea had been tumultuous since that state's independence in 1958, Toure remained the only West African leader unshakably committed to revolutionary socialism and a frequent supporter of Soviet positions. As a sign of the two governments' common interests, Guinea had been chosen by the USSR for the first joint meeting of Eastern European and African trade union leaders, to be held

in Conakry in March 1969. Yet the fragility of Toure's continued rule was apparent to Moscow. In a January 24, 1969, broadcast to Africa, Radio Moscow likened the current situation in Guinea to that in pre-coup Ghana and Mali: in each instance, it argued, too much attention was given to politics at the expense of economic development and too much power was concentrated in the hands of one man.<sup>16/</sup>

The USSR's increasingly pragmatic and opportunistic approach to West African affairs was most clearly demonstrated in its reaction to the Nigerian civil war being waged at the time of the trawler incident. When Great Britain and other Western powers refused in 1967 to provide the Nigerian central government with modern weapons for its fight against the secessionist Ibo tribe, Moscow seized the chance for influence by agreeing to sell and service some two dozen MIG-17 fighters and other military equipment. It followed this sale with its usual long-term trade agreements, student exchange programs, and cultural tours.<sup>17/</sup>

The importance of the trawlers to the Kremlin--or some bureaucratic element thereof--because of their possible use in covert intelligence operations must be a matter for speculation. During the months following Nkrumah's overthrow, Moscow had officially dissociated itself from his radio appeals from Guinea, where he was in exile, for a Ghanaian revolt against the military.<sup>18/</sup> Moscow denied "slandorous allegations" that it was providing arms to Nkrumah's followers in Guinea. But events officially testified to by former Nkrumah guards during the investigation of the trawler incident cast serious doubt on Soviet denials. Several Ghanaians who had followed Nkrumah to Guinea claimed that they had received military training there in a variety of Soviet, Eastern European, Cuban, and Egyptian arms sent for the

former leader's use. One guard described studying maps of Ghana's military facilities with Cuban advisers in the presence of the Cuban ambassador to Guinea. Another reported being told that arms and ammunition would be taken by boat to a coastal area in Ghana close to Nkrumah's home district, and it was near this district that the Soviet trawlers were detained.<sup>19/</sup>

Additional testimony offered in January 1969 suggested that the Soviet boats had been engaged in more than fishing. Some of Nkrumah's former associates claimed that the trawlers were two of three such vessels permanently based at Conakry. A Ghanaian sergeant identified one of the Russian crewmen as a Red Army major who in Nkrumah's days had lectured in Ghana on security problems. Another "sailor" was identified as a security instructor by his former Ghanaian driver. The captain of one of the vessels had lived in Ghana for a year, officially working as an oceanographer. While in most instances the Russian seamen flatly denied these identifications, the various strands of evidence suggested that the Ghanaian government had stumbled onto the initial phase of a covert Soviet operation designed to smuggle arms and exiles into Nkrumah's home province. If this was true, the longer the Russians were held and interrogated, the greater the risk that sensitive information damaging to Soviet interests in West Africa would be unearthed.

The fundamental Soviet objective during the incident was quite apparent--the immediate release of the trawlers and seamen detained by Ghana's navy on October 10. No evidence exists to suggest disagreement about this objective in the Soviet government, but there was some controversy about the best means of pursuing it.

Although there is every reason to believe that the Soviet embassy in Ghana conveyed a release request to the Ghanaian government immediately after the impoundment of the trawlers in Takoradi harbor, public knowledge of the Soviet demand did not exist until October 17, when, in the words of Tass, the Soviet embassy in Ghana "gave a press conference. . . at which it stated an emphatic protest against the detention of two Soviet trawlers" and "demanded that the Ghanaian authorities release the trawlers forthwith."<sup>20/</sup> At the press conference, a Soviet spokesman explained that the trawlers' engines had been damaged and that they had been driven into Ghanaian waters by the wind and currents. Since they had not been fishing, he said, they had violated no international convention. Then the spokesman bitterly complained that the Ghanaian authorities detained the men for six days without official explanation and, in violation of international law, had not permitted Soviet embassy officers to meet with the crew.<sup>21/</sup>

During the following weeks, a war of words erupted between the Soviet embassy and the Ghanaian government, with statements occasionally added by the Soviet media for good measure. The Russian protest of October 17 gained the embassy a single visit with the arrested seamen, but no progress was made toward their actual release.<sup>22/</sup> Radio Moscow claimed on October 21 that the incident was causing "friction" between the two countries.<sup>23/</sup> On November 15 the Soviet embassy issued another public statement criticizing the Ghanaians' intensive investigation, accusing officials of "acts of violence" against the crew and ships, and stating that it expected the vessels and men to be freed "in the near future."<sup>24/</sup> In early December the Soviet ambassador in Ghana again protested the illtreatment of the crews and damage to the boats.<sup>25/</sup> As Soviet frustration at the stubborn Ghanaians mounted,

the first and only comment on the affair from a major Soviet leader was heard. In Moscow President Nikolai Podgorny referred on February 9 to "possible consequences" if the trawlers were not soon released.<sup>26/</sup>

Almost immediately after the trawler dispute had gained public attention on October 17, the Soviet Union began a gradual escalation of coercive threats against Ghana. The first steps were economic and were taken on October 21, when Radio Moscow observed that the Ghanaians did not realize "the consequences of disrespect to Soviet sovereignty." If mutual relations were damaged, this could affect "technical cooperation." The Soviet commentator noted that the USSR had just agreed to assist in the construction of a cement factory and a canned fish factory in Ghana--two of the many Soviet aid projects that Moscow had suspended at the time of Nkrumah's fall.<sup>27/</sup> More direct Soviet economic pressure was applied in late January, when the USSR discontinued its deliveries of fish and oil. The cancellation of Soviet petroleum shipments left Ghana's sole refinery with extremely low stocks. It was on this matter of actual economic coercion that the only known instance of division in the Soviet bureaucracy came to light, when the trade section of the Soviet embassy in Accra opposed such politically motivated manipulation of trade. <sup>28/</sup>

Events in early February precipitated Moscow's move toward military pressure. First, in response to formal testimony given on February 3 by Nkrumah's former security guards about Soviet, Eastern European, and Cuban operations in Guinea, Ghanaian officials decided to fly their Russian prisoners to Accra for an appearance before the board of inquiry. The Russians had given Ghana little information during prior interrogations at Takoradi, and the decision to remove all fifty-two of them to Accra surely suggested to Moscow an increased effort to compel testimony. Second, Ghana's response to

Soviet economic coercion in January quickly established the limited effectiveness of such pressure, at least in the short run. Several major American oil companies that had recently signed offshore prospecting agreements with Accra had consented to supply 72,000 tons of crude oil to the Tema oil refinery if the Ghanaian government would repay a portion of its defaulted 1.5 million-pound debt to them.

On February 16, a week after Soviet President Podgorny's warning of "possible consequences," Tass announced that the Soviet "missile ships Boyki and Neulovimyí, a submarine and a tanker, under the command of Captain V. Platonov, are paying a courtesy visit to Conakry from 14th to 20th February." <sup>29/</sup> On February 20, the Soviet naval group left Conakry and slowly proceeded eastward around the West African bulge into the Gulf of Guinea. The contingent's itinerary was not announced. On February 26, with the Soviet ships approaching Ghanaian waters, the legal process in Accra seemed to accelerate. The captains of the Soviet trawlers were allowed to plead guilty to "navigating an unlicensed motor fishing vessel within Ghana's territorial waters" and pay a modest \$150 fine.

Moscow apparently concluded that its pressure campaign had succeeded and on February 27 broadcast that "the Soviet trawlers and their crew reported to have violated Ghana's territorial waters have been released."<sup>30/</sup> But this conclusion was premature. Radio Accra subsequently announced that "the two Captains and one member of the crew were . . . remaining behind to assist the Amisah Commission, which is investigating charges of subversion." Throughout the last days of February and the first three days of March, the Soviet naval contingent remained in the Gulf of Guinea. Finally on March 3, the

two trawlers and forty-nine crewmen were allowed to leave Ghana--but without their captains and one first mate.<sup>31/</sup>

While Accra's decision to retain the three Soviet sailors for further interrogation cannot have pleased Moscow, other factors weighed against an escalation of military pressure. The Soviet Union was clearly worried that its military presence in the area would be publicly linked with the trawler incident and that it would be accused of blatant coercion of a small African state. This concern was evident in Radio Moscow's complaint on February 27 that the British Broadcasting Company had been airing "fabrications produced by its correspondent in Accra to cast a shadow on Soviet policy in Africa and to question Soviet loyalty to the principle of noninterference in the affairs of African states." <sup>32/</sup>

Soviet caution was understandable. Throughout the previous year, the USSR had exploited the Pueblo incident, speaking of "the disgraceful spy mission of this American spy" and the "blackmail" and "war hysteria" that the United States had futilely generated in an effort to gain the ship's release.<sup>33/</sup> And as recently as January 15 Radio Moscow had criticized the port visits of the U.S. frigate Dahlgren to West Africa as "only the first stage in naval penetration in the area" in support of "neo-colonialism and reaction."<sup>34/</sup> Any evidence now in February of Russian gunboat diplomacy might illuminate a hypocritical gap between Soviet words and deeds.

Of equal importance, the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 had already tarnished the USSR's image in Africa. Even such socialist states as Tanzania expressed "profound shock" at an action perceived as "betrayal of all the principles of self-determination and national sovereignty." Comparable denunciations were heard from the Congo Democratic



Republic, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, Sudan, Tunisia, Uganda, and Zambia. <sup>35/</sup> Therefore, despite the only partial success of Soviet efforts to free the trawlers and their crews, on March 4 Tass hastily announced in Moscow:

The Soviet missile ships Boiki and Neulovimyi, a submarine and tanker, will arrive in the Nigerian port Lagos on an official visit on March 5, in accordance with an agreement reached by the Governments of the Soviet Union and Nigeria. The Soviet naval squadron . . . will stay there till March 10. <sup>36/</sup>

The Soviet ships quietly steamed away from Ghanaian waters.

On March 11 the Soviet naval contingent left Lagos to take up station once again in the Gulf of Guinea. <sup>37/</sup> Then on March 19 a spokesman for the Ghanaian government announced that the Russian captains and first mate held since October were now free to leave the country. Moscow did not publicly react to this final release--perhaps because of the announcement three weeks before indicating that it had already taken place. On March 26 the Soviet naval group returned to the Mediterranean, without the movements of the ships ever having been linked to events in Ghana by the world press or by Soviet spokesmen.

While it is clear that the primary purpose of the task force had been to increase the pressure on Ghana, it is unlikely that the mission would have been undertaken if other Soviet relationships and interests in West Africa had not permitted the disguise of the ships' principal purpose from the press and other African states. And it is also apparent that the port visits to Guinea and Nigeria were something more than window dressing. The five-day stay

in Conakry came at a time of threat to the USSR's unpredictable client, Toure: On January 14, the Guinean president spoke of a plot to overthrow him similar to that recently executed in Mali. In February Touré began a purge of his military and cabinet that would ultimately lead to death sentences for twelve opponents of his regime and the arrest of more than a thousand persons. The six-day port visit to Lagos was also wholly consistent with the USSR's intensifying campaign to cement relations with Nigeria and exploit the Western stand and the Biafran war. Quite possibly the Russian hierarchy could not have been persuaded that the first such deployment of Soviet combatants to West Africa was wise--particularly after Czechoslovakia--without the existence of these other Soviet interests in Guinea and Nigeria.

#### Ghanaian Behavior

Ghana's foreign policy during the trawler incident was the responsibility of eight military officers of the National Liberation Council (NLC) who had ruled the country since the exile of Nkrumah. The primary influence was the NLC deputy chairman and minister of external affairs, Policy Inspector-General John W. Harlley. Harlley's career in intelligence work and his experiences under Nkrumah had made him unusually sensitive to internal subversion and deeply suspicious of communism in general and the Soviet Union in particular.<sup>38/</sup> Several 1968 events illustrate Harlley's leading role in foreign relations and the NLC's concern about communist subversion. In September Harlley described an illegal railway strike as a "gigantic conspiracy to topple the military regime in Ghana" and as part of a plot "hatched from outside Ghana."<sup>39/</sup> In November the NLC ordered the arrest of the commander in chief of Ghana's armed forces, Air Marshal M. A. Otu, for alleged complicity in

a plot to return Nkrumah to power. At the time of Otu's arrest, Harlley announced that the coup had been timed for around Christmas and that the two Russian trawlers taken into custody in October were believed to have been "on a reconnaissance mission" connected with the Otu coup.<sup>40/</sup>

The other major influence on Ghanaian foreign policy at the time were the professional diplomats and economists of the foreign ministry who had been rehabilitated by the NLC after Nkrumah's fall. Generally, these career officers were far more mindful than the security-minded NLC of the benefits of international nonalignment and economic exploitation of East-West rivalry. To these foreign ministry personnel a number of difficult and technical problems had been delegated by the NLC, among them the necessary negotiations for new foreign aid and the rescheduling of foreign debt made essential by the crushing \$800 million in borrowing Nkrumah had left behind.<sup>41/</sup>

The enigma of the trawler affair is the absence of any direct evidence that Ghanaian officials were cognizant of the furtive military pressure applied by the Soviet Union during the last part of February. Nonetheless, the few analysts who have studied the affairs understandably conclude that "Ghanaian officials were almost certainly aware of the presence of the Soviet ships during the crucial period of the negotiations."<sup>42/</sup>

With Tass announcing the arrival of four Soviet ships in Conakry and their scheduled departure date of February 20, and with a similar announcement of the Nigerian port visit, it is difficult to imagine that officials in Accra were unaware of the ships' presence in the Gulf of Guinea. At the same time, it is evident that the Soviet vessels were always deployed in an unprovocative manner--apparently a considerable distance from the Ghanaian coastline. None of the international press filing stories from Accra during this time ever

referred to the presence of Soviet ships in the area; any visual sightings of the Russian naval contingent or public reference to it in Accra would certainly have been reported by some enterprising writer.

The NLC's lack of public reaction suggests that the ships' presence in the region was perceived for what it was--a discrete signal of Moscow's strong feelings about the injury being done to its prestige, personnel, and property. Yet presumably Ghanaian officials did not feel threatened by the appearance of the ships. If they had, a simple expedient would have been the kind of international publicity that the Soviet Union was trying hard to avoid. That the NLC was well aware of this propaganda weapon at its disposal was implied in a statement made by Radio Accra when the forty-nine crewmen were released on March 3:

The Government . . . reiterated its desire to maintain friendly relations with the Soviet Union on the basis of equality, mutual respect for each other's sovereignty, and territorial integrity, and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. It reminded the Soviet Union that, as a great and powerful state, it bore a special responsibility in ensuring that its attitude toward Ghana-Soviet relations was guided by these principles. 43/

In general, there is no evidence that the NLC perceived any major risk to its security in refusing to release the Soviet trawlers, even when word arrived of Soviet combatants in the Gulf of Guinea. It did perceive compliance with the Soviet demands without first establishing the actual extent of Russian complicity with possible attempts at subversion as a greater threat to national security and the regime's survival. This prompted the obstinate

refusal to be intimidated by increasing Soviet pressure. The paramount importance of internal security was emphasized by the arrest of Air Marshal Otu in November for possible plotting with Nkrumah supporters. Evidence offered to the board of inquiry on Communist support for Nkrumah in Guinea strengthened the NLC's determination to conduct a comprehensive investigation before releasing the crews.

Certainly there were valid grounds for the NLC's suspicions of the crawlers. They had first been spotted by a Ghanaian air force plane off the coast of Nkrumah's home province, and the pilot had observed six dugouts off-loading cargo from one of the trawlers. When a Ghanaian patrol boat arrived to apprehend the two Russian ships while they were still in Ghana's territorial waters, the trawlers headed for open sea. Only after the patrol boat had fired six cannon shots did the trawlers halt. Not only had their cargo been jettisoned during the brief escape attempt, but several of their logs were burned during the course of the chase.<sup>44/</sup> Subsequent interrogation of some of the Ghanaians trading with the trawlers on October 10 established that this was the third time the Soviet seamen had visited the area. On October 2 the Russians had hailed three Ghanaian fishermen about fifteen miles offshore and arranged for a trade of fish for local fruit and animals, which was carried out on October 4. A similar exchange had occurred on October 10, the day the trawlers were impounded. The NLC's theory was that the Russians had wished to develop contacts with local fishermen so that arms and exiles brought from Guinea could be smuggled ashore.<sup>45/</sup>

Ghanaian investigators, however, failed to uncover much additional evidence in four months of effort. Police searches of villages in Nkrumah's district uncovered no smuggled arms. Despite obvious inconsistencies between

actual events and the Russians' story about engine trouble, this explanation was clung to throughout numerous interrogations. Some of the urgency of the situation evaporated when information gathered by the inquiry board absolved Air Marshal Otu of any complicity in subversion or any knowledge of the Russians' activities. As Radio Accra reported on March 3 when the Russian crews were released, the decision had been made only when the NLC was "fully satisfied that the country's security was in no way compromised by this step."<sup>46/</sup>

As fears for Ghana's internal security waned, international economic affairs--always important to foreign ministry professionals--assumed greater significance. Ghana's precarious economy made it vital to avoid any unnecessary rupture in trade and aid relations with the USSR. Ghana's per capita GNP grew only 1 percent in 1968, after no growth at all in 1966 and 1967. The economy was passing through a difficult phase of deflation made necessary by Nkrumah's undisciplined public spending. Although Ghana's trade with the Communist states had fallen since 1966, it still constituted 12 percent of the country's exports and imports in 1967. Moreover, in 1964-68 Ghana had enjoyed important trade surpluses with the Soviet Union, and in 1968 it was actually unable to meet Soviet demand for its principal export, cocoa. The trade surpluses had helped finance large oil imports from the USSR, and though petroleum could be obtained from Western oil companies, it had to be paid for in hard currency made scarce by Ghana's chronic trade deficit with the industrial democracies.<sup>47/</sup>

Other factors complicated the economic picture. Because of its own financial problems, Great Britain had failed to provide the level of economic aid that might have been expected in response to its former colony's swing

back to the West. And there was clear evidence that the Ghanaian public was not interested in the one-sided economic dependency likely to result from the complete severance of trade relations with the Soviet bloc countries. In December 1967, for instance, the NLC had agreed to permit Abbott Laboratories of Chicago to assume control of the country's unprofitable state pharmaceutical company, but the domestic storm aroused by the terms of the agreement compelled Abbott to withdraw from the contract.<sup>48/</sup> In late February 1969 the Associated Press filed a story from Ghana stating that "to many proud young men, the sin of Mr. Nkrumah's relations with the Soviet Union, Communist China and other Communist bloc lands is matched by the Council's [NLC's] dependence on the West."<sup>49/</sup> Such politico-economic factors pointed toward resolution of the trawler affair unless definitive evidence of Russian subversion could be established by the Ghanaian military regime.

#### The Question of Influence

Admiral Zumwalt has written that "Ghana brought her humiliation on herself by her refusal to engage in pre-gunboat diplomacy," implying that the release of the Russian trawlers and crew in March 1969 was the result of intimidation by the Soviet navy.<sup>50/</sup> A careful reading of the available evidence, however, makes this proposition questionable, although sufficient data to settle the matter conclusively do not currently exist. Although Ghana eventually released the trawlers, this was done only after a five-month detention that was as humiliating to the Soviet Union as was any later intimidation to the Ghanians. The NLC did not treat its Russian captives with

traditional respect. When the Soviet crewmen initially refused to disembark from their boats in Takoradi harbor, one Soviet seaman was bayoneted and another knocked unconscious. During their first week in Ghana, the seamen were denied the right to see the Soviet ambassador. After finally being permitted to visit the crew in mid-October, the staff of the Soviet embassy was not allowed another visit until January 8.<sup>51/</sup>

Although the Soviet trawlers were released while the Soviet task force was in West African waters, this was only after the NLC's failure to confirm any subversive actions by the Soviet trawlers and after it had demonstrated decisively its willingness to deal firmly with those suspected of such action. And the professional diplomats in the Ghanaian foreign ministry had felt from the outset that there was insufficient data to substantiate any accusations of clandestine activities.<sup>52/</sup>

But perhaps the most telling evidence against Soviet coercion is the move the NLC was making toward release of the ships and crew before the Soviet naval combatants left Conakry on February 20 for Ghanaian waters a thousand miles away. In Lagos, Nigeria, on February 18, the chairman of the NLC and Ghana's formal head of state, Lieutenant General Joseph A. Ankrah, said that "it won't be long" before his government released the fifty-two Soviet fishermen and the two trawlers seized four months earlier.<sup>53/</sup> At the very most, awareness of the Soviet naval group later in the week might have speeded up a decisionmaking process obviously well on its way. At worst, the latent threat of Soviet military action might have aroused new resistance in the NLC to the trawlers' release. Although the crews were formally fined on February 27 and their pending release announced in Accra on February 29, they were not permitted to leave the country until March 3. And even then the NLC



decided to hold the three senior officers until March 19, as if to demonstrate its refusal to be intimidated by the Russians.

Moscow's own behavior suggests that it appreciated how little influence the naval task force had on Accra. No official linkage was drawn between naval movements and the trawler episode. The Soviet navy left Ghanaian waters for Nigeria on March 3 without gaining the release of the most senior Russian seamen.

Although a small deployment of combatants to West Africa was an unprecedented Russian act, the long-established political, economic, and military relationship with Guinea and the growing ties with Nigeria provided the USSR with a situation in which it was free to operate without attracting unwanted attention. The naval deployment itself represented a natural extension of Soviet worldwide operations--Moscow had steadily moved its port visits westward along the Mediterranean littoral between 1964 and 1968, reaching as far as Morocco in October 1968.<sup>54/</sup>

This furtive gunboat diplomacy may have been encouraged by the complete absence of official comment on the matter by either the American or the British government during the four months of bickering leading up to the actual arrival of the Soviet ships. Certainly a deployment at this time could be viewed as taking maximum advantage of the transition in U.S. presidential administrations and the preoccupation of the U.S. Navy with events in Southeast Asia. But unquestionably of greater importance, in light of the negligible risks entailed by the mission, was the availability of Soviet naval power as an employable complement to diplomatic and economic pressure. With the number of Soviet ship-days in the Mediterranean reaching ten thousand by 1968, it was only a matter of time before Russian combatants made their first voyage into the waters of sub-Saharan Africa. Events combined in Ghana, Guinea, and Nigeria to bring this about.<sup>55/</sup>

The long-term impact of the trawler affair on Soviet relations with Ghana proved to be nil, however. The NLC's suspicion of the Soviet Union was of declining importance to Ghana's foreign policy, as political power was officially transferred to a newly elected civilian government in September 1969. The existing level of trade with the USSR was maintained. And any lingering anxiety about Communist support for Nkrumah's return was abruptly ended in early 1972 with Nkrumah's death. Furthermore, in early 1972 Ghana's military once again intervened to depose the civilians elected in 1969, primarily because of continuing economic stagnation and inflation. The new military government, while maintaining a nonaligned status, sought better relations with the Communists, restoring diplomatic relations with Cuba and China and expanding trade and aid relations with the Soviet bloc.<sup>56/</sup>

Nor did the incident have any immediate effect on the interests of the United States. While the American trading position with Ghana had greatly improved in 1966-68, establishing the United States as Ghana's second largest trading partner, no support was sought from Washington during the trawler affair.<sup>57/</sup> With negligible U.S. awareness of the event and the growing opposition to American interventionism, the lack of White House concern did nothing to harm the President's standing with Congress or the general public. Only the U.S. Navy seems to have shown some natural interest in this unprecedented Soviet operation off West Africa, with former Chief of Naval Operations Zumwalt later describing it as a signal "that the USSR was ready, willing and able to protect its interests in parts of the world hitherto inaccessible to it." But the ad hoc and defensive nature of the action, and the rapid return of the four Soviet ships to their Mediterranean fleet on

March 26, mitigated any concern the U.S. Navy might have felt about the implications of the deployment.<sup>58/</sup>

While no aspect of the trawlers affair was of major importance in itself, this first exercise of Soviet naval power for coercive effect in African waters was conducted with a sophistication and subtlety at odds with the popular stereotype of the heavy-handed Russian. Although the principal objective was to secure the release of Soviet men and property, the less urgent aims of bolstering a Soviet ally, Sekou Toure, and cultivating political influence in Nigeria were also pursued. These ancillary objectives were sought in a way that concealed the primary purpose of the mission.

What if the USSR had chosen not to employ naval power at all in February 1969 to signal its seriousness? Currently available evidence indicates that the outcome of the incident would have been precisely the same. Ghana's failure to find confirming evidence of Russian subversion and its desire to continue, if possible, normal economic relations with the Eastern bloc would have proved to be adequate incentive for eventual release of the Soviet boats. Obviously, the NLC had not tried to exploit the affair for domestic or international propaganda. Its overriding concern was the number of real and imagined plots it suspected against its continued political control.

A direct resort to military force by the Soviet Union in response to the trawler seizure would have, on the other hand, severely damaged Russian interests in Africa. The two destroyers and the submarine were physically unsuited for an actual rescue of the Russian seamen. Presumably, a larger naval force would have not only ensured the permanent loss of the crew, but also confirmed the opinion that the crew had been engaged in operations that Moscow desperately wanted to conceal. African solidarity in the face of such

Russian aggression could have been expected, and the smoldering memories of Czechoslovakia would have been rekindled in African capitals. It is unlikely that a military confrontation would have significantly altered American involvement or perception of U.S. interests in West Africa, given the groundswell of public opposition. But increased West African receptivity to security collaboration with the original colonial powers, Great Britain and France, would undoubtedly have followed any such demonstration of Soviet willingness to use force against a poorly armed African state.

The Conakry Raid, November 1970

During the 1960s Guinea harbored not only Nkrumah and his exiled entourage but also the adherents of several other political causes. Of these groups, the most important was the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde, the national liberation movement dedicated to ending Portugal's five centuries of colonial rule in neighboring Guinea-Bissau, or as Lisbon preferred to call the territory, "Portuguese Guinea." PAIGC-organized strikes in the capital city of Bissau during 1958-59 had ended in the shooting deaths of some fifty dock workers by the Portuguese colonial police and had forced a drastic revision of the PAIGC's strategy toward rural guerrilla warfare.

With Sekou Toure's blessing, PAIGC leader Amilcar Cabral and his secretariat took refuge in Conakry, where they openly operated schools for revolutionary training and solicited worldwide support for their anti-colonial cause. Supplies for the PAIGC's guerrillas in Guinea-Bissau had to be transported through Guinea-Conakry. The PAIGC's soldiers frequently sought sanctuary from the Portuguese army in neighboring Guinea-Conakry, and

Portuguese military positions were often shelled from the safety of Toure's republic--apparently by Toure's soldiers as well as the PAIGC.<sup>59/</sup> A second base for the PAIGC was located in Senegal to the North. In 1969 the Portuguese army of some 30,000 troops began an aggressive campaign to locate and liquidate guerrilla training camps, including those located inside the frontiers of Guinea-Conakry and Senegal. The consequence was an escalating series of Portuguese bombings and incursions of Guinea and Senegal, and a number of formal protests against Portugal lodged with the UN Security Council by these two African states.<sup>60/</sup>

A second source of conflict in the region was the widespread resentment of Sekou Toure's rule among tens of thousands of Guineans who had fled their native country for Senegal, the Ivory Coast, Gambia, France, and other nations. Many had emigrated because of the harsh socialist measures Toure had imposed after independence in 1958: state monopoly of wholesale trade, collective farming, monopolistic state enterprises, and the nationalization of foreign investment. But despite Guinea's abundant natural resources, Toure's socialist planning was slow to produce. With a shortage of trained manpower, the departure of French technicians, and no modern economic infrastructure, goods disappeared from the shelves of the state stores and soaring inflation imposed a particular hardship on urban dwellers in the money economy. During the first half of the 1960s, real economic growth barely kept pace with population expansion, and by the end of the decade, per capita growth was actually negative.<sup>61/</sup>

First to move Guinea toward socialism and then to prevent his system's shortcomings from bringing him down, Toure was forced to rely on authoritarian mass mobilization and indoctrination. Plots against him

increased, and frequent purges of the government and military were needed to preclude the consolidation of opposition. Mali's coup in late 1968 was particularly unsettling to Guinea's president and resulted in several precautionary acts: the army leadership was changed in early 1969; a people's militia was organized to counterbalance the army's power; and political committees were installed in army barracks. By 1970 Toure had become obsessed with the thought that a domestic counterrevolution or foreign invasion might sweep away the classless order to which he had devoted his life.<sup>62/</sup>

In the early morning of November 22, 1970, Toure's worst fears seemed realized when there was an amphibious raid on Conakry. At 2 a.m., 350 to 400 soldiers came ashore from six unmarked troopships that had slipped into Conakry harbor. In small squads, the invaders spread out to strategic points in the city: Toure's summer residence, the home of PAIGC leader Amilcar Cabral, the national radio station ("Voice of the Revolution"), the prison holding numerous Portuguese soldiers captured by the PAIGC, the city power station, and the airport. Several of the squads quickly proved inadequate to their tasks. Toure's summer home was destroyed but the president was not found. Cabral, it developed, was in Bulgaria. The invaders assigned to seize the airport and neutralize Guinea's air force instead chose to defect to Toure's forces. The Portuguese prisoners were liberated and the city power supply knocked out, but the transmitter for the radio station was never located. As members of Toure's people's militia and the PAIGC began to fight back, many of the invaders withdrew to their troopships with their released prisoners and wounded. By early morning of

November 23, the insurgents had withdrawn from Conakry's streets and sailed away, leaving behind as many as three hundred Guineans dead and nearly a hundred of their own party taken prisoner.<sup>63/</sup>

Interrogation of the captured raiders quickly indicated that the attack had been planned by General Antonio de Spínola, the military governor and commander in chief of Portuguese Guinea. The participants had included about 150 black Portuguese soldiers from Portuguese Guinea, a like number of Guinean exiles recruited throughout West Africa, and a small number of white Portuguese officers. General Spínola's "Bay of Pigs" had been motivated by his desire to strike a decisive blow in the decade-long struggle against the PAIGC. Toure's replacement by a regime unwilling to provide sanctuary and assistance to the rebels would have been a crushing blow to the liberation movement.<sup>64/</sup>

The invaders' failure to capture or kill Toure and Amílcar Cabral vitiated Spínola's plan. A number of the attackers had been poorly briefed and others quickly surrendered out of fear or indifference to the Portuguese cause. Yet even then, the relative ease with which the Portuguese and exiles had landed in Conakry, liberated prisoners, and sailed away demonstrated the inadequacy of Guinea's national security forces. A better executed invasion might have achieved Spínola's objectives.<sup>65/</sup>

Toure's reaction to the raid was an immediate request on November 22, delivered by Guinea's Ambassador to the UN, for an emergency meeting of the Security Council and an "immediate intervention of airborne UN troops to assist the national army of the Republic of Guinea."<sup>66/</sup> When the Security Council chose to dispatch a fact-finding commission to Conakry instead of

peacekeeping forces, the Guinean government was gravely disappointed. Only a slightly more encouraging response awaited Toure's appeal on November 23 for "all brotherly African countries" to provide "concrete support" for his regime. While several African countries pledged to send military forces if they were needed, only Nigeria and Egypt in subsequent days actually sent token units. Moreover, when the African states took up the issue of a Pan-African military force for such emergencies at a meeting of the Organization of African Unity on December 7, the idea was defeated just as it had been on previous occasions.<sup>67/</sup>

Perhaps it was his low expectation of Pan-African support or his realization that few African states had modern forces at their disposal that led Toure to announce on November 25 that "we are now making the same appeal to all countries outside the African continent" for military assistance.<sup>68/</sup> Guinea's president indicated that he especially wished to receive airplanes--both fighters and bombers. It was a request presumably related to the fact that Portuguese jets had violated and bombed Guinean territory with increasing regularity during 1970 and that on the morning of the November 22 invasion several unidentified aircraft had flown over the city of Conakry.<sup>69/</sup>

If Toure and his ministers had any lingering doubts about Guinea's long-term need for external military support, they were laid to rest when word reached Conakry on November 27 of a ground incursion by two hundred Portuguese or exiled soldiers at Koudura--the principal military base for the PAIGC on Guinea's northern frontier. The outbreak of this new violence while the UN investigative mission was still in Guinea was taken by the government as further evidence of the ineffectualness of the international body.<sup>70/</sup> On



November 29, Conakry announced that "36 mercenaries were killed and 18 captured" and "two members of our popular forces were killed" in battles in the Kondura area.<sup>71/</sup>

Apparently it was this second major incident that prompted Toure's private appeals to the American and Soviet embassies in Conakry for some symbolic show of military support for his regime. This request set off a series of subsequent military, diplomatic, and economic actions by the USSR whose long-term ramifications could be only dimly foreseen at the time.

### International Reaction

Because of the apparent importance of third-party reactions to the Conakry raid in determining the eventual nature of the Soviet response, it is useful to begin with a discussion of them. The most visible and immediate reaction came from other African states. Despite a history of strained relations between Toure's radical regime and the more moderate African states, the image of a white colonial government attacking a poor black Islamic state was enough to rally support for Guinea in every corner of the continent. Every African government not under white control rushed a message to Conakry denouncing neocolonialism, imperialism, and racism, and in several cases the message included an offer of financial or military help to repel the Portuguese.

In Nigeria students marched through Lagos taunting passing Europeans and protesting in front of the American embassy U.S. military assistance to Portugal provided under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. In Equatorial Guinea Portuguese homes were sacked and burned and their occupants driven from the country.<sup>72/</sup> At an emergency meeting of the Organization of

African Unity (OAU) held December 9-11, forty-one foreign ministers unanimously agreed to condemn "those states, particularly the NATO powers, who sustain Portugal in her colonial aggression, by their continued assistance to her." The OAU voted to establish a special fund "to provide financial, military and technical assistance to Guinea," and it directed its Liberation Committee to "substantially increase financial and material assistance to PAIGC."<sup>73/</sup>

At the UN, the Conakry raid tapped the reservoirs of hostility toward white influence in Africa. In December 1969 the UN had designated the year 1971 as "International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination" and had that same month formally condemned Portugal for its bombing and shelling of Guinean and Senegalese territory. In March 1970 the United States had for the first time exercised its Security Council veto on a resolution calling for Britain to apply force against the illegal Rhodesian regime.<sup>74/</sup> In October 1970 the United States had refused to support a General Assembly resolution outlining a program of economic, political, and military action against the remaining colonial regimes in Africa.<sup>75/</sup>

It was hardly surprising, therefore, that the five days of Security Council debate over the Conakry raid quickly became an unrelenting attack by the third world and socialist states on Portugal, NATO, and vestiges of white influence in Africa. Even such pro-Western states as Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia, and Liberia called for Portugal's expulsion from NATO and castigated U.S. opposition to proposed economic sanctions against Lisbon.<sup>76/</sup> In contrast, the Soviet Union was praised by African states for "its dynamic role in the struggle for the emancipation of Africa."<sup>77/</sup>

One potential non-African source of military assistance for Toure was Cuba. Castro had taken a personal interest in Amilcar Cabral and the Portuguese Guinea liberation movement since January 1966, when Cabral appeared at the Tricontinental Conference of African, Asian, and Latin American leaders in Havana. As a result of his well-received speech on "Theory as a Weapon" and his endorsement of the independent revolutionary course being pursued by Cuba, Cabral had emerged from the conference as one of the third world's revolutionary leaders. Castro soon dispatched a number of Cuban instructors to assist the PAIGC. By the late 1960s Cubans had assumed responsibility for several PAIGC training camps in Guinea and Senegal and were accompanying these guerrillas into Portuguese Guinea. In January 1971, less than two months after the Conakry raid, authorities in Bissau listed four Cuban soldiers killed in the fighting of 1970.<sup>78/</sup> Meanwhile, Cuban advisers were also playing an important role in the training of Toure's local militia.<sup>79/</sup>

While the available information is understandably sketchy, there seems to be sufficient data to argue that Castro responded to Toure's worldwide request for help by agreeing to significantly increase Cuba's direct support of the PAIGC guerrillas. In light of Guinea's refusal to abandon the PAIGC cause, this was a contribution of considerable importance to the solution of Toure's own security problem. On May 24, 1971, it was reported in Lisbon that thirty-four Cuban "technical advisers" had arrived in Senegal

to take charge of armaments, communications, and engineering units for the PAIGC. Early in September 1971 General Spínola stated in Lisbon that each guerrilla operational unit was now led by Cuban officers, of whom there were several hundred among the 6,000 trained guerrillas based in Guinea and Senegal. <sup>80/</sup> Among the socialist countries of the world, Cuba was clearly bearing the physical burden of the fighting.

Surprisingly, one of the external powers to whom Toure looked after the Conakry raid was the United States. There was a certain logic to this in view of his deliberate unpredictability in international affairs. One of the secrets of his independence had always been the maintenance of an uneasy equilibrium between the great powers--particularly the Soviet Union, China, and the United States. As a result, despite Toure's bombastic Marxist rhetoric, the small West African nation was blessed with \$103 million in American aid during the years 1961-71.

Furthermore, during the 1960s Toure had cautiously opened his nation to the direct private investment needed to transform Guinea's abundant mineral reserves into exports and foreign exchange. Fifty percent of Guinea's export earnings in 1970 originated with the Olin Matheson-controlled consortium, which operated the nation's principal bauxite mine and refinery. An even larger and more promising enterprise began in 1966 with the formation of an American and European consortium to develop the world's richest

bed of bauxite. With assistance from the U.S. government and the World Bank, the consortium raised \$185 million in capital to build the new railroad, deep-water port, and mining towns required for the project. Construction was well under way in late 1970. <sup>81/</sup> Because of the growing American participation in Guinea's economy, it was less surprising that in late November 1970 Toure privately requested a symbolic display of American military support to help deter future external attacks.

The probability of a positive response from the Nixon administration to Toure's request was nonexistent, however. The White House had already chosen to move away from the Kennedy-Johnson inclination to apply pressure to Lisbon in behalf of African self-determination, and the White House's judgment on African affairs was never seriously contested inside the government. Working from the premise that no existing African liberation movement could succeed in changing the policy of any of the white African regimes, Nixon and Kissinger formally adopted in January 1970 a policy of increased "communication" with the whites. For Portugal, the operational results were several executive steps, such as resumed negotiations on the Azores and full Export-Import Bank facilities for the Portuguese colonies, which were surely seen in Lisbon as tacit support for its colonial policy. <sup>82/</sup>

In view of the new trend in White House policy, it is hardly surprising that the United States failed to respond to Guinea's public and private pleas for military support. Privately, the Nixon administration sent a confidential message to Toure around December 1. On December 2 the Guinean president

publicly thanked Nixon for his "message of sympathy and support on the occasion of the grave and criminal aggression by Portugal," probably as a goad to the Soviet Union and a signal to Portugal. 83/

Soon the public release of the damning UN investigation and four days of unrelenting Security Council condemnation forced the White House into public action. During the last day of debate on December 8, the American ambassador to the UN officially criticized the invasion as contrary to the UN Charter and read into the record the contents of Nixon's confidential message to Toure. Even then, the United States abstained from voting on the watered down Resolution 290 that endorsed the UN report, demanded compensation from Portugal, and threatened sanctions in the event of any future attack. Perhaps as a result of White House reaction to intelligence reports that the USSR was responding militarily to Toure's appeal, a State Department spokesman announced on December 11 that the U.S. government had decided to grant Guinea \$4.7 million in food aid "to contribute to the reconstruction made necessary by the attempted invasion." 84/

#### Soviet Behavior

What general Soviet interests, then, were engaged by the Conakry raid? The principal interest appears to have been the maintenance and expansion of Russian political influence in Guinea-Conakry, Guinea-Bissau, and Africa generally. Although the mid-1960s had been rather bleak

years for Soviet objectives in Africa--with the loss of clients in Ghana, Mali, and the Congo--these setbacks had accentuated the importance of Guinea-Conakry and Guinea-Bissau to continued Soviet influence in West Africa. The PAIGC had emerged as Africa's most successful liberation movement, with Amilcar Cabral and his followers credibly claiming dominance in half of Guinea-Bissau's countryside. Furthermore, throughout the sixties, external support for the PAIGC had gradually gained an international respectability comparable to that achieved by the National Liberation Front in South Vietnam. In 1965 the UN General Assembly had appealed to all states to render moral and material support to the people of the Portuguese colony and requested that UN members sever all diplomatic, commercial, and military relations with Portugal. Such liberal governments as Sweden and Canada and several American church organizations were directly aiding the PAIGC by 1970.

Not only had material assistance to the PAIGC relieved official international sanction since 1965, but the liberation struggle in Guinea-Bissau also presented the Soviet Union with an unparalleled opportunity for expanded influence at the direct expense of NATO. Because of Portugal's membership in NATO, its active part in the North Atlantic trading community, and its receipt of U.S. economic and military aid, the diplomatic, commercial, and strategic costs of compelling an end to Lisbon's colonial wars fell squarely on the United States, Great Britain, France, and West Germany.

The opportunity to affiliate itself with one of the few successful and respected national liberation movements had not escaped the USSR's attention. Because of Khrushchev's early hope for revolution in Africa and the USSR's growing competition with China, Moscow had begun low-cost assistance to the PAIGC as early as 1960. Surplus rifles and ammunition shipped to Guinea found their way into the hands of PAIGC guerrillas. A small number of PAIGC cadres received training in the Soviet Union as well as in China, Czechoslovakia, and Algeria beginning in 1960. This Russian material assistance grew steadily throughout the 1960s, and though insignificant on a global scale, it was crucial to the outcome in Guinea-Bissau, a poverty-stricken country of no more than 600,000 inhabitants. Aside from that given by Guinea, no military aid from the newly independent African states was forthcoming. At an OAU meeting in 1964, PAIGC officials openly complained of the lack of tangible support from their liberated brethren. As late as 1970, the budget for the OAU's Liberation Committee, which funneled assistance to black guerrilla movements, was only \$2 million for the entire continent. Small wonder, then, that in July 1970, while in Havana, Amilcar Cabral complained to the Cuban press about the "insufficient" aid of the OAU and took the opportunity to praise the Soviet Union, "which gives us almost all the new material, the arms and ammunition, we use in our struggle." <sup>85/</sup>

By the end of 1970 this assistance had reached truly substantial proportions, as if to compensate for the fact that Moscow was still



unprepared to provide guerrilla instructors and cadres as Cuba did. In quality, the weaponry now included long-range mortars, artillery, antiaircraft guns, machine guns, mines, and bazookas. In quantity, the PAIGC had available as much as its 6,000 to 7,000 men could use--despite the Portuguese army's capture of fifty tons of Soviet arms in 1969 and another fifty tons in 1970. <sup>86/</sup>

Not only did the Soviet Union use the opportunity to assist the PAIGC at the modest cost of surplus weapons, but it also made full use of the struggle in its propaganda war with the West. Verbal attacks escalated beginning in early 1969, as Moscow sought to counter its setbacks in Ghana and Guinea and moved to exploit the more conservative policies of the new American and British governments. In an English broadcast beamed to Africa on March 25, 1969, for instance, Radio Moscow attacked the actions of the United States and Britain throughout Africa, criticizing their trade with South Africa, their indifference to the Namibia problem, and their lack of support for Rhodesian sanctions. The broadcast described the "dirty war of the Portuguese colonialists in Africa" as a "joint business undertaking for the Americans and British, who are making fabulous profits from the exploitation of Africans in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau." <sup>87/</sup>

On the eve of the Conakry raid, Soviet analysis had moved into a self-congratulatory phase; Moscow seemed convinced that the efforts of the PAIGC and its supporters were about to pay off. A Pravda

commentator wrote on November 12, 1970, that "the Lisbon rulers have been confronted with major successes by the patriots of Guinea (Bissau), whose national-liberation movement is of great significance for the cause to completely eliminate Portuguese colonialism in Africa. . . . Despite NATO assistance and the colonial authorities' use of every neo-colonialist strategem and effort, the 30,000-man Portuguese army has sustained heavier and heavier losses." 88/

Moscow's growing commitment to, and political exploitation of, the liberation movement in Guinea-Bissau put a new face on its long and stormy relationship with Sekou Toure. Although Moscow no longer saw Toure as the pro-Soviet revolutionary he was taken to be in the 1950s, the late 1960s had brought a gradual warming of relations between the two governments based on converging practical interests. One area of interest was a common commitment to the PAIGC's success. Moscow recognized that Guinea's support was indispensable, since nearly all the PAIGC's supplies from overseas passed through the port of Conakry. Pravda's August 1969 commentary on Guinea-Bissau observed that

in the South and the East the country borders on the Republic of Guinea, and in the North on Senegal. The friendly support of these states is very important to this small people. Aid to the patriots comes through Guinea and Senegal, and the severely wounded are evacuated to these countries. Conferences and meetings of the insurgents are frequently held on these friends' soil, and support bases have been set up there. 89/

Another common interest was bauxite. The Soviet Union had begun

to participate in the development of Guinea's vast reserves, despite Moscow's pique at Guinea's deviation from the "socialist path" through agreements with Western corporations. In September 1970 an agreement was signed that called for a joint Soviet-Guinean mining and smelting development sixty-five miles east of Conakry and Soviet rights to import at least 2 million tons of Guinean bauxite for thirty years. <sup>90/</sup>

Finally, the Soviet Union's renewed interest in Guinea during 1969-70 appears to have been associated with a more general cyclical trend toward greater Soviet awareness of African affairs, a trend created by a sudden turn of events for the better after successive disappointments in the mid-sixties. A socialist coup in Sudan in May 1969, a similar power change in Libya in September 1969, and another shift to the left in Somalia in October 1969 led the Soviet press to comment exuberantly on "how logical and promising this path is becoming for many developing countries, notably in Africa." <sup>91/</sup>

These broad Soviet political interests in both the PAIGC and Toure's regime were intensified by the events of November 1970. The fragile status of both the PAIGC and Toure became evident when an undisciplined band of invaders was able to wreak havoc on Guinea's capital for twenty-four hours. At the same time, the raid heightened the USSR's opportunity to cultivate closer relationships with African states at the expense of Portugal's embarrassed NATO allies.

During the week following the Conakry invasion, the Soviet

Union joined the chorus of African states in demanding the "immediate withdrawal of all Portuguese armed forces from Guinean territory."

While this Soviet objective was stated as early as November 22 by the USSR's ambassador to the UN, Yakov Malik, the demand was subsequently repeated by Tass, Pravda, and Izvestiya. <sup>92/</sup> Not until November 30 did the Soviet Union hint that it might assume direct responsibility for deterring future military attacks on Toure and the PAIGC, and that hint came in an authoritative foreign policy address by Communist Party Secretary Leonid Brezhnev commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of Communist rule in Armenia. Buoyed by continuing American withdrawal from Vietnam, Brezhnev argued:

The bloody crimes committed by the imperialists and their hirelings--whether it is the war against the people of Vietnam, the bandit attack on democratic Guinea or the campaigns of terror against liberation forces in other parts of the world--are leading to a situation in which the anti-imperialist solidarity of the masses of people the world over is growing ever stronger.

The Soviet party chief implied that a firm Russian response would be forthcoming in such situations:

Soviet foreign policy . . . takes an implacable stand against any encroachments by the imperialists on the freedom and independence of the peoples and is directed toward administering a vigorous and decisive rebuff to such encroachments. The Soviet Union extends comprehensive support--political, economic and other kinds of support--to countries and peoples against which imperialist aggression is directed.

Joint actions by the freedom-loving and anti-imperialist forces in rebuffing aggression are the best means for sobering the extreme hotheads and adventurists in the imperialist camp, for preventing the unleashing of new

"local" wars and their development into a war threat to all mankind. Life convincingly proves this. 93/

Brezhnev's remarks appeared to be addressed specifically to recent events in Guinea.

The Soviet Union's desire to arrange a "joint" deterrence effort against further Portuguese military action was clear in a statement unanimously approved by the heads of state of the USSR, Rumania, Poland, Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria at the December 2 meeting of the Warsaw Pact countries. Published in the December 4 issues of Pravda and Izvestiya, the statement took cognizance of Portugal's attempt to "overthrow the progressive regime in Guinea" and "to retard the liberation struggle of the peoples of Guinea (Bissau), Angola, Mozambique, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia." The invasion, the Warsaw Pact leaders argued, proved the importance of redoubling efforts toward the ultimate objective: "The imperialist aggression against Guinea demonstrates once again the insistent necessity of the speediest possible and complete liquidation of the colonial and racist regimes." And "in the struggle for their liberation, the African peoples can continue to count on assistance from the socialist states." 94/

The central importance of the Brezhnev speech and Warsaw Pact declaration became clear at the UN on December 5 as the Security Council took up the issue of action in response to the recently completed UN investigation of the invasion. Ambassador Malik asked rhetorically, "What must be done? What measures must be taken?"

and then proceeded to quote the Soviet party leader's demand for "combined action" to ward off "adventurist hotheads." Malik made reference to the Warsaw Pact statement of December 2--which was subsequently circulated for all to read--and quoted the pledge of "assistance from the socialist States." He repeated the ultimate Soviet objective: "It is becoming more obvious than ever that, until there is no longer a single colonial regime or colonial bridge-head on the African continent and until all troops have been withdrawn and all colonial military bases dismantled, the peaceful and independent existence and the development of the African States will be in danger." 95/

If any doubt existed about the Soviet Union's stand, it should have been dispelled on December 8 with the passage of UN Security Council Resolution 290. With the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Spain abstaining, the resolution was approved with the hearty support of the USSR, third world countries, and several usually pro-Western regimes. Of the many elements in the resolution, the following were the most important to Soviet interests:

"The Security Council"

4. Appeals to all States to render moral and material assistance to the Republic of Guinea to strengthen and defend its independence and territorial integrity;

5. Declares that the presence of Portuguese colonialism on the African continent is a serious threat to the peace and security of independent African States;

6. Urges all States to refrain from providing the Government of Portugal with any military and

material assistance enabling it to continue its repressive actions against the peoples of the Territories under its domination and against independent African States;

7. Calls upon the Government of Portugal to apply without further delay to the peoples of the Territories under its domination the principles of self-determination and independence in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV);

8. Solemnly warns the Government of Portugal that in the event of any repetition of armed attacks against independent African States, the Security Council shall immediately consider appropriate effective steps or measures in accordance with the relevant provisions of the United Nations Charter. 96/

With formal adoption of Resolution 290, the full text was transmitted by cablegram to the governments of Portugal and Guinea.

The debate during the December 5-8 sessions of the Security Council gave the Soviet Union ample opportunity to clarify the nature of its objectives in the struggle between Portugal and the PAIGC and its supporters. However, the extent to which the Soviet Union was willing to act alone in this matter was not carefully spelled out in the debates. Moscow had vigorously but unsuccessfully advocated collective action in the form of mandatory economic sanctions against Portugal by the Security Council. And as a future deterrent Malik had called for a formal commitment to military "demonstrations, blockade, and other operations by air, sea or land forces of members of the United Nations" if economic sanctions "do not produce the proper results and if Portugal persists in its acts of aggression against African states." 97/

It was impossible to determine during the UN debates whether the Soviet Union was merely playing to a gallery of sympathetic African states, knowing full well that the NATO allies would veto any collective punishment of Portugal. Therefore, a more credible sign of Moscow's willingness to defend Toure and the PAIGC was actual military action undertaken the first week of December. Several events occurred during this period to set off a Soviet military response. Following the November 27-28 ground battle in northern Guinea, Toure made a private request for military support from the Soviet Union and the United States. While this in itself might have sufficed to precipitate Soviet action, the Russians may have feared that the American government would unexpectedly preempt the Soviet role of third world protector. Finally, by the beginning of December it was well known at the UN that the recently completed mission to Guinea was drafting a final report that would demonstrate Portuguese culpability in the attack. All of these factors laid the foundation for a low-risk Soviet military response that would simultaneously signal Portugal, Guinea, and the PAIGC.

During the last week of November, a Soviet destroyer was detached from the Mediterranean fleet and sent around the West African bulge. Stopping first at Dakar, Senegal, immediately north of Guinea-Bissau, it was joined by a Soviet oiler also sent to the area. When a second Soviet destroyer arrived, the three ships began cruising the waters off Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, and



Guinea-Conakry. On December 24 the three ships entered Conakry harbor without publicity and berthed in a remote section of the port. On December 30 the three ships slipped out of Conakry harbor for the return voyage to the Mediterranean. 98/

In succeeding months several similar cruises off Portuguese Guinea were made by two Soviet destroyers and an oiler. These missions were apparently prompted by Toure's continuing fear of invasion and by specific requests to the Soviet embassy for a show of military support. The USSR's first naval patrol in December was followed by three similar missions between February and the end of July 1971. Each deployment started from the Soviet Mediterranean fleet and consisted of from one to three destroyers. The locus of naval activity was adjacent to Portuguese Guinea--the area through which any new seaborne invasion of Guinea-Conakry or Senegal could be expected to travel. 99/

The Soviet media were silent about these deployments, perhaps suggesting high-level effort to control the risks involved. The possibility of a confrontation with Portugal could not be ruled out, and although NATO forces would be unlikely to join, Portugal had a sizable navy. Soviet silence may also have indicated some ambivalence about identification with Toure's regime. Although the Guinean leader had gained enormous sympathy in both the East and West as a result of the raid, a good deal of this sentiment began to evaporate in January--at least in the West--as the African

nation seethed with mass arrests, "show" trials, and public hangings. Finally, Toure was noted for his quixotic independence, and any suggestion from Moscow that the Guinean leader had become dependent on Soviet military power might quickly have produced the opposite effect.

During the months following the Conakry raid, other steps were taken by the USSR to enhance the ability of its clients to deter or resist attack. In January 1971, presumably in response to Toure's November 25 request for aerial defense, three additional MIG-17 fighters were dispatched to Guinea, bringing the number of Soviet-donated planes of this type to eleven. However, as another Russian risk-avoidance measure, Nigerian and Algerian pilots assumed command of these planes, and they immediately began harassment sorties over the Portuguese-controlled towns of Guinea-Bissau. 100/ The flow of arms, particularly defensive arms for Toure's army, also increased with the arrival of three more coastal patrol ships, tanks, anti-aircraft guns, and radar equipment. One can only speculate about whether the simultaneous arrival of additional Cuban cadres for the PAIGC represented the active coordination of Soviet-Cuban military policy.

As during their previous naval deployment to West Africa in February 1969, the Russians seized low-risk opportunities both to improve their relations with other governments and to advance the liberation cause. Port calls by Soviet destroyers to Dakar in

December 1970, twice in 1971, and at least six times in 1972 seem to fit this pattern. Leopold Senghor, the president of Senegal, was a supporter of decolonization but had refused to permit the PAIGC to operate military bases or receive arms shipments in Senegal. As the Portuguese stepped up their punitive attacks on guerrilla sanctuaries in Senegal during 1969-70, Senghor tried to protect his countrymen by closing down PAIGC offices and using his army to curb the PAIGC border movements that prompted Portuguese attacks. <sup>101/</sup> Thus the visit of Soviet destroyers beginning in 1970 may have been designed to strengthen Senghor's courage in the face of Portugal's increasingly aggressive strategy and threatening events in Conakry.

There is evidence, in fact, that Senghor's support for the PAIGC cause began to increase in 1971, although several competing explanations for this policy change exist. Portuguese intelligence saw it as Senghor's attempt to deflect attention from his nation's deteriorating economic situation. But the surprisingly strong reaction of Africa and the UN to the Conakry raid also encouraged such a shift. Soviet port visits are likely to have played only a minor role in Senghor's change of heart, given the existing security provided by substantial French military forces in the Dakar area and a standing French pledge to assist Senegal against civil disorder. <sup>102/</sup>

Beginning in September 1971, Soviet naval activity in West

Africa showed signs of expansion and reorientation. The operational focus of the USSR's West Africa Patrol was shifted away from Portuguese Guinea and relocated at Conakry harbor. A Soviet destroyer, tank landing ship, and oiler took up permanent stations in the area. Port calls at Conakry became frequent and long; Portuguese intelligence reported that Soviet naval officers were often seen in the Guinean capital. 103/

Moscow's expansion and relocation of naval activity at Conakry represented not only an immediate response to Toure's latest charge of impending invasion but, more important, a growing appreciation of Guinea's long-term potential as a forward military base. The establishment of a permanent Russian naval base along the West African bulge would permit more efficient and broader sea and air surveillance of the deployment areas for U.S. submarines in the Central and South Atlantic and facilitate wartime interdiction of the vital sea-lanes running between North America and the Mediterranean, Europe, and the Middle East. For the USSR's own sea-launched missiles, a base in West African waters would largely offset the otherwise necessary transit of the hostile Greenland-Iceland-United Kingdom gap by Russian submarines to reach launch stations in the Central Atlantic. That the Soviet navy was striving to obtain alternative bases beyond this gap was apparent from the construction of a submarine base at Cienfuegos, Cuba, in 1970, after a series of submarine visits there beginning

in 1969. A naval base in West Africa became more attractive when Soviet leaders abandoned the Cienfuegos base because of pressure from the Nixon administration, and in doing so appeared to accept the principle that no Russian strategic missile systems were to be based in the western hemisphere. 104/

In late 1971, however, Toure rejected a Soviet request that the USSR be permitted to build a permanent naval facility on Tamara Island, just off the coast near Conakry. Various sources have reported attempts by the Soviet navy since then to gain Toure's support for this project. One instance of this was reported by the London Daily Mail in January 1976, prompting Tass to hotly deny that the Soviet Union was building such a submarine base. 105/

Also supporting the proposition of a significant expansion of Soviet objectives in Guinea has been the use of the port of Conakry for activities of little relevance to Toure, the PAIGC, or even West Africa generally. Kelly, for instance, has reported seven separate visits by Soviet submarines to Guinea between 1969 and 1973--most frequently, presumably, for replenishment and crew rest. 106/ Submarine tenders have been deployed to the Gulf of Guinea since 1972, in association with annual fleet exercises. 107/ Conakry has served as a replenishment stop for Soviet ships in transit to the Caribbean, the South Atlantic, and the Indian Ocean. An augmented West Africa Patrol was

employed in the Gulf of Guinea and off the Angolan coast during the Angolan civil war, apparently to deter interference with arms and troop deliveries to the port of Luanda. 108/

Finally, the Soviet Union has used Guinean airfields in the pursuit of its strategic and broader African objectives. Under the direction of Cuban engineers, Conakry airport was expanded and improved in 1972-73, and upon its completion in July 1973, the Soviet navy immediately began using the new airfield for long-range reconnaissance flights of the mid-Atlantic to pinpoint the positions of U.S. ships and submarines. 109/ During the 1973 Middle Eastern war, Soviet reconnaissance aircraft operating from Conakry helped keep track of U.S. naval movements to the Mediterranean. Other flights have been flown in conjunction with fleet exercises of the Soviet navy and, again during the Angolan war, over shipping lanes between the Caribbean and western Africa. On several occasions, these flights were coordinated with similar operations flown over the western Atlantic from Cuba. 110/ The Angolan war enlarged the role that air facilities in Guinea could play in support of Soviet political and military interests. Soviet military aid airlifted to Angola during the war was staged through Conakry, and MIG-15s based in Guinea for the training of the Guinean air force were used by Soviet pilots for surveillance of the troops of the Western-backed factions in Angola. 111/

### Portugal's Response

What can be said of Portugal's reaction to the Conakry raid and subsequent events? Lisbon immediately reacted by denying any responsibility for the attempted coup. Statements to this effect were promptly issued by General Spínola in Bissau, by the Portuguese foreign minister in Brussels, and by the Portuguese ambassador at the United Nations. <sup>112/</sup>

Lisbon had good reasons for attempting to dissociate itself from any responsibility for the Conakry raid, for this unsuccessful aggression endangered Portugal's vital political, economic, and military links to the other North Atlantic nations. Portugal's ability to field and supply a sophisticated colonial army of 140,000 soldiers rested squarely on a continuing tide of military imports and domestic economic growth made possible only by American and European trade and direct investment. Seventy percent of its trade was with North Atlantic markets, and direct investment from the United States, France, West Germany, and the United Kingdom had helped foster the relative prosperity of the 1960s. As the UN vote on Resolution 290 indicated, only these NATO allies stood between Portugal's colonial practices and ostracism by the international community. <sup>113/</sup>

Events during and following the Security Council debates of December 4-8, 1970, indicated that any repetition of the Conakry raid would seriously impair Portugal's vital relations with the

Western powers. At the UN, "the delegates of the United States and Britain made it clear that they did not care to defend Portugal against the charges made against her." <sup>114/</sup> The American, British, and French ambassadors ultimately acknowledged the veracity of the Security Council's investigative report. Western diplomats saw the affair "as extremely damaging to member countries in NATO." <sup>115/</sup> When the presence of the West Africa Patrol was reported in the United States in February 1972, State Department officials implied that American economic interests in Guinea were more important than U.S. support for Portugal's African policy. According to the Washington Post, "the State Department is anxious to avoid any complications that might lead Toure's socialist regime to seize American aluminum companies. They have a \$150-million investment in Guinea's booming bauxite and aluminum industry." State Department officials expressed no disapproval of the fact that "the Soviet task force is there primarily to protect Toure's regime from another invasion from neighboring Portuguese Guinea." <sup>116/</sup>

Such lack of allied political and military support deterred Portugal's military strategy as much as did the objective military power interposed by Moscow after December 1970. In the spring of 1971 Portuguese Foreign Minister Patricio scoffed at claims that NATO support enabled Lisbon to carry on its African wars: "It is not true. We are complaining to our NATO allies



that they don't give us any support. They won't even give us political support in Africa." <sup>117/</sup> A Washington Post correspondent touring Guinea-Bissau, Angola, and Mozambique during the weeks following the Conakry raid quoted Portuguese officers as saying: "We should go get the guerrillas. . . . But if we did what the Americans do in Cambodia and Laos, the whole world would scream at us--including the Americans." <sup>118/</sup>

There can be little doubt that the possibility of a military clash with the Soviet navy was an additional reason for Lisbon's lack of direct military action to stop Toure's considerable support of the PAIGC. In taking this new factor into account, Lisbon would only have been echoing the U.S. Navy's concern at the time that Portugal, should it sponsor another attack, might wind up facing the USSR alone. <sup>119/</sup> But it is essential to recognize that Portuguese fear of possible Soviet action could not be separated from simultaneous fear of pressure from all points of the globe--from NATO, from several African states, from the United Nations, from other Communist states such as China and Cuba. One high-ranking Portuguese official described his government's problem in the spring of 1971: "We can't afford to internationalize these conflicts any more than they already are. It would be more dangerous for us in the long run. Most of our trouble now comes from outside involvement in Portuguese problems." <sup>120/</sup>

Other factors reinforced Portugal's hesitancy to sponsor another invasion of Guinea-Conakry. A major consideration was Lisbon's belief that there was an alternative strategy to that of eliminating the leadership of Guinea and the PAIGC. While the invasion planned by General Spínola held out the immediate possibility of "final victory" in the guerrilla war, the battlefield situation in Portuguese Guinea was by no means as desperate as was claimed by Portugal's enemies. Under General Spínola's leadership, Portugal's military position in Guinea-Bissau had gradually improved after 1968. Control of the countryside had stalemated in a rough parity between the government and the guerrillas, with the Portuguese army free to move where it chose.

Meanwhile, through new expenditures for roads, agriculture, industry, and media services, Spínola seemed to be making headway in the long-term battle for the "hearts and minds" of the native population. This apparently optimistic military picture in 1970-72 permitted Lisbon to take a less anxious view of Toure's support of the PAIGC guerrillas. <sup>121/</sup> Only with the increasing sophistication of the Cuban-trained PAIGC and the USSR's introduction of hand-held surface-to-air missiles and heavy artillery did the military situation shift decisively against Portugal in late 1972. Portuguese casualties began to rise rapidly as the PAIGC made massed assaults on isolated outposts, bombarded previously secure towns, and neutralized Portuguese jets and helicopters

with surface-to-air missiles. 122/

Other factors militated against a repetition of the Conakry raid. For one thing, 1971 and 1972 were years when moderate leaders in Africa spoke of a "dialogue" with the white regimes that would avert a bloody war, and Portugal was loath to take any action that would undercut this gesture. Then, too, the Guinean exiles had proved to be rather incompetent soldiers. And in Lisbon the first serious signs of an effective antiwar movement were beginning to appear. By spring 1971, the Washington Post could report from Portugal that "students have begun to hold mild protest rallies, labor unions are less forthright in their support for the wars, and the number of army deserters and draft evaders has reached the point of being publicly mentioned by defense officials as a national shame." 123/ Sabotage of Portuguese military equipment and NATO installations began in the winter of 1970-71, and the terrorism had reached such proportions by November 1971 that Prime Minister Caetano declared a "state of subversion" and postponed several long-awaited political reforms. 124/

Thus, while it seems likely that the presence of Soviet naval power in Guinean waters from December 1970 on was of some influence in the caution Lisbon exercised after the Conakry raid, this is a deterrent influence that cannot be disentangled from other important forces all pointing in the same direction: the complete lack of allied support for any offensive activities beyond Portuguese

Guinea, a stabilizing military situation in Guinea-Bissau, the growing support of other African and communist states for the PAIGC and Toure, the near adoption of formal sanctions against Portugal by the UN after the first raid, the growth of an anti-war movement in Portugal, and the military ineffectiveness of the Guinean exiles.

#### The Guinean Response

As described by Claude Riviere, an international authority on Guinean affairs:

Sekou Toure's constant preoccupation with a possible attack by the imperialists and his obsessive fear of a domestic counterrevolution . . . could hardly promote fraternal cooperation with other states. At every turn, their leaders risked being accused of helping imperialism, or tolerating neocolonialism, or trying to undermine Guinea internally, either by giving asylum to Guinean emigres or by plotting to wreck the Guinean revolution. 125/

Such fear of attack and continuous alienation of potential African allies gave the Soviet Union bargaining power that it could use in pursuing its interests in and beyond Guinea.

There is no evidence to suggest that the Russians attempted to exploit Toure's fears during the first nine months of occasional naval protection. But the financial costs of their support steadily increased as Guinea made repeated requests for aid and evidence accumulated that the threat to Guinea's president was as much internal as external. Toure himself told the nation

on the first anniversary of the Conakry raid that among those arrested after the attack were "sixteen Ministers, five former Ministers, several provincial governors, a large number of high-ranking officials, and most high-ranking officers of the Guinean Army." <sup>126/</sup> To provide Toure with continuous protection from external and internal attack and to reduce the burden of frequent operations in the region, Moscow proposed to relocate the West Africa Patrol at Conakry and requested access to support facilities there. Because of the added security this change provided against his foreign and domestic enemies, it is not surprising that Toure gave his consent.

Other privileges subsequently extended to the Soviet Union seem easily explained by Toure's dedication to African liberation and his fear of counterrevolution. Permission to expand Conakry airport in 1972 to facilitate Soviet use jibes with Toure's fear of Portuguese air attack on the capital. His entrustment of the control of Guinea's planes and naval ships to foreign advisers and his use of Cuban bodyguards seem compatible with his deep and perhaps justifiable suspicion of the military's loyalty. And in light of Toure's unswerving support for African liberation movements as well as his espousal of the struggle against Portuguese colonialism, it is difficult to believe that Guinea's behavior during the Angolan war demonstrated undue Soviet influence. After Toure's announcement that he had sent troops to fight beside

the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola), it is not surprising that he permitted Soviet use of his airport and seaport in the same cause. 127/

Counterbalancing Toure's natural receptivity to anti-Western and pro-socialist causes has always been his fierce dedication to national and personal autonomy and the particular economic needs of African peoples. This has influenced his leadership since 1958, when Guinea alone chose independence from France rather than membership in a Franco-African community. The result of Toure's militant nationalism has been constant wariness of overdependence on any single benefactor and a deliberate exploitation of great-power rivalries for the economic gain of Guinea. Tactically, this nationalist policy has operated in a complex web of economic and military relationships with numerous Communist and capitalist states, often with impulsive ruptures in Guinea's foreign relations to counter excessive dependency and foreign indifference. Guinean concessions to the great powers have therefore often come in pairs, such as matching U.S. exploitation of the Boke bauxite deposits with a comparable mining agreement with the Soviet Union. Diplomatic rupture has been an inevitable risk of doing business with Toure, one that even the Soviet Union has not managed to avoid despite its historically close relations. In 1961 the Russian ambassador was expelled because of his opposition to Toure's flirtation with the Kennedy administration and the apparently

overzealous Soviet propagandizing of Guinean youth. 128/

Toure's sensitivity to national dependence has been reflected in his reaction to Soviet requests since November 1970. The most obvious is his consistent refusal to grant Moscow the right to construct and use a naval base on Tamara Island. One method adopted by Toure for offsetting this Soviet pressure has been receptivity to Chinese offers of naval assistance. In 1973 a Chinese advisory mission was accepted, and in 1973-74 China gave Guinea four coastal attack ships. These transfers have served to remind Moscow that other sources of aid are available. 129/

The Soviet Union, to be sure, is aware of Toure's tenacious independence; the unpredictable cost of violating it may explain Moscow's general refusal to take any public credit for the accomplishments of the West Africa Patrol. For this reason, the liberation war in Guinea-Bissau was a useful facade for both Toure and the USSR, with each hiding less idealistic interests in the West Africa Patrol behind the veil of support for the PAIGC and threat of external invasion. It must surely be concern for Toure's sensitivity that has made Moscow react so petulantly to leaked newspaper accounts of the possibility of a Soviet naval base on Tamara Island.

The USSR's contributions to Toure's external and internal security have provided leverage transferable into some Russian gains. The use of Conakry harbor for the replenishment of Soviet

submarines, naval combatants, and merchant ships passing through the region or participating in fleet exercises appears to be a clear gain little related to Toure's interests, as was the use of Conakry airport for Soviet navy long-range reconnaissance flights over the mid-Atlantic. Such flights were surely of negligible service to Guinea's interests, too.

Even these Soviet gains have proved to be fragile, however. With the end of the war in Guinea-Bissau and a decline in the fighting in Angola, the relative influence in Guinea of Soviet military protection and Western economic power has gradually shifted to the advantage of the latter. A serious disagreement emerged between Moscow and Conakry in 1976 over the low Russian prices paid for purchases of Guinean bauxite. Toure's socialist economic strategy and the continuing West African drought cut deeply into agricultural output and resulted in violent hunger demonstrations in August 1977 which shook the very foundations of the Guinean government. As a consequence, Toure commenced a fundamental reorientation of his foreign and domestic policies which is still in progress. In a major signal to the West, Toure ended Soviet use of Guinea for long-range reconnaissance flights in September 1977, terminated Cuban use of Conakry airport for transporting troops to and from Africa, and reduced Soviet naval operations allowed out of Conakry harbor. Missions were dispatched to the Western powers in search of economic assistance, and new liberalized terms were extended



to foreign capital investors. Guinea's highly uncertain future as a staging area for Soviet military activities has prompted Moscow to look for other facilities in Mali, Sierra Leone, Benin and Guinea-Bissau. 130/

#### The PAIGC Response

Although Soviet military power appeared to be most directly aimed at deterring Portugal and exploiting Toure's internal vulnerability, the PAIGC leadership was an important secondary target of Soviet military action. Air and naval facilities at Bissau and on the Cape Verde Islands three hundred miles west of Dakar were of potential strategic value comparable to, if not greater than, those in Guinea-Conakry. These bases may have become more important to the USSR in the 1970s because of Toure's refusal to allow it to use Tamara. And the respect that Amilcar Cabral and the PAIGC commanded throughout Africa and other states of the third world and increasingly in the West made defense of his movement a sound investment in Soviet global influence.

Certainly Soviet assistance to the PAIGC during the last year of the war was important to the struggle's outcome. As noted, Moscow provided a steady stream of increasingly sophisticated weaponry and equipment until Guinea-Bissau's official independence from Portugal on September 10, 1974. In fact, the leadership core of the PAIGC was saved from extinction by the West Africa Patrol

on January 20, 1973, when Amilcar Cabral was assassinated in Conakry by a faction of PAIGC dissidents and Portuguese collaborators, and many of his senior lieutenants were herded onto three boats bound for Portuguese Guinea. Alerted by Guinean and Cuban authorities, the Soviet navy was able to intercept the assassins after a chase at sea. However, in accordance with the low profile tacitly agreed to for the West Africa Patrol, credit for this rescue was publicly given to the "Guinean Navy" or "Conakry naval units" by official spokesmen. 131/

Like Toure, the PAIGC leadership had legitimate security concerns after decolonization. Approximately fifteen hundred black commandos were demobilized by the Portuguese army in Guinea-Bissau at independence and a number of these soldiers chose, because of their past association, to go into exile in Senegal. Defeated black elite groups and former members of the Portuguese secret police were suspected of plotting against the new PAIGC government. And the tragic loss of Cabral resulting from lax internal security left its mark on the thinking of the leaders who survived the long war. Thus it is understandable that the new government in Bissau has welcomed foreign security assistance. The Soviet Union has provided the start of a modern military force with two coastal patrol ships and several MIG fighters. The traditional Soviet agreements to provide fishing boats, crew training, and a fish-processing factory have also been signed. Some

one hundred Cuban military advisers are still believed to be working in Guinea-Bissau. East Germany helped establish a radar station to monitor naval traffic. And the West Africa Patrol remains at Conakry, within easy distance of Bissau. <sup>132/</sup>

What advantages has Moscow gained through these past and current military transfers? The most important is the appearance in Bissau of a new political order inherently more sympathetic to liberation causes, which the Soviet Union also supports. During the Angolan civil war, Guinea-Bissau dispatched soldiers to fight beside the Cuban- and Soviet-backed MPLA. Cuba ferried troops to Angola by way of Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands until this route was abandoned to "avoid bringing harm to a defenseless country." <sup>133/</sup> Such assistance was predictable in light of Amilcar Cabral's own membership in the MPLA dating from 1956, the MPLA's original headquarters in Conakry, and strong fraternal bonds among all the principal Portuguese-liberation groups. Looking toward the future, PAIGC delegates agreed at their third party congress in December 1977 that though Guinea-Bissau would generally remain nonaligned in foreign affairs the party would support the southern African liberation movements, the Palestine Liberation Organization, Fretillin of Timor, and Western Sahara's Polisario Front.

While the USSR has assisted into power PAIGC leaders who tend to share some of its causes, the lure of continued Soviet

assistance seems insufficient to alter the PAIGC's own definition of its interests. Despite much consternation in NATO that the USSR would be granted military access to Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands at least comparable to that received in Conakry, the PAIGC has rigidly denied foreign military traffic any routine use of its facilities as well as the right to establish military bases on its soil. The new state, like Toure, is as much concerned about economic matters as about military ones, owing in part to the ravages of the long war and ten years of uninterrupted drought on the Cape Verde archipelago. Possibly Moscow's failure to provide assistance anything like that granted during the war is a tactic designed to induce greater military and political cooperation. But leaders in Bissau recognize that their economic well-being depends on enlarging the previously narrow circle of benefactors to include the wealthier Western industrial nations. As a result of vigorous PAIGC solicitation, the United States, Sweden, the Netherlands, Denmark, West Germany, and France have all made important trade or aid concessions. There is little evidence that the Soviet Union has been able to translate its extensive military support of the PAIGC into direct influence over the foreign policy of Guinea-Bissau. 135/

#### Significance of Outcomes

The Portuguese Guinea war has special significance in that

the actual deployment of Soviet naval combatants to the area for deterrence represented a level of military involvement in third world affairs that went beyond the Soviet Union's normal inclination to operate through client governments and movements. The attempt to constrain Portuguese military reaction--while at the same time arming the PAIGC, the Cubans, and the Guineans for military action against Portuguese Guinea--represented a quasi-offensive action and a potential for direct combat involvement out of character with the historic focus of the Soviet Union on its responsibilities in Europe and Asia.

Soviet actions in the vicinity of Guinea do not suggest, however, that Russian leaders had abandoned their traditionally cautious management of the risks associated with the use of military power. It is an exaggeration, for instance, to argue, as has Admiral Zumwalt, that after the Conakry raid "the Soviets did not hesitate, in a part of the seas quite remote from their sources of supply, to challenge a member of an alliance accustomed to maritime supremacy." <sup>136/</sup> In reality, the USSR did hesitate for at least ten days before committing ships to the area--until international events had clarified the risks and gains of such a deployment. By the time the first Soviet destroyers arrived in early December, a number of events had greatly reduced the dangers of this action: an overwhelming show of international support for Guinea had emerged; even NATO members like the United States had made sympathetic

gestures to Toure; the UN was in the process of formally accusing and condemning Portugal; and the Guinean president had made both public and private requests for military support. To these risk-minimizing factors could be added considerations of longer standing, such as the restriction of NATO's operational zone to an area north of the Tropic of Cancer (that is, some eight hundred miles north of Portuguese Guinea); increasing constraints on the U.S. commitment of military power to third world conflicts; and formal UN General Assembly encouragement of direct support to liberation movements in Portuguese Africa since December 1965.

Even under such favorable circumstances, the West Africa Patrol during its first year hardly seemed the naval "challenge" suggested by Zumwalt. No Soviet announcement was made of the presence or purpose of the ships, which provided an opportunity for face-saving withdrawal if there was an actual Portuguese reaction or a NATO counterdeployment. During its first phase, which lasted until September 1971, the USSR did not provide Toure and the PAIGC with a permanent military deterrent but deployed in the area temporarily, in response to specific requests. And when the patrol assumed a permanent character in September 1971, its relocation toward Conakry not only increased its capability for intervening in Guinea's internal affairs but also reduced the risk of an inadvertent clash at sea with Portuguese ships off Guinea-Bissau.

Another element of the USSR's cautious opportunism during the Portuguese Guinea war was its willingness to commit mobile naval power for deterrence purposes but its consistent refusal to commit ground forces, which Cuba had done. This pattern has been repeated in other African states. In response to requests for military support from friendly regimes, Toure had soldiers airlifted to Sierra Leone in March 1971 and to Benin in January 1977. At least on the first occasion, when internal order was restored several weeks later, the Soviet Union dispatched a naval combatant to these countries as a show of friendship and support for the shaky regime and quite possibly as a sign of approval for Guinea's peacekeeping action. Similar timing prevailed during the Angolan civil war. 137/

Finally, the composition and operation of the West Africa Patrol suggests that the USSR, though reluctant to use its own ground forces in third world countries, is more prepared to do so in internal support of a threatened client regime than in transgressing an international boundary to remove a hostile regime. Only after the West Africa Patrol was relocated in Conakry in September 1971 was a tank landing ship added to the Soviet combatants. The presence of this vessel suggested a conditional willingness to intervene directly in Guinean politics, which was never evident in Soviet assistance directed against Portugal.

Soviet military actions in West Africa after the Conakry raid proved to be of marginal importance to American politics. Not only

were Americans generally predisposed against any additional overseas commitments, but few U.S. politicians and citizens were even dimly aware of Soviet activities in the area. A news blackout on the topic was in force at the White House and the State Department, as Nixon administration officials struggled to maintain working relations with both Portugal and Guinea. Only when the Soviet navy made extensive use of Conakry airport for long-range reconnaissance missions during the 1973 Middle East War did the Pentagon leak word of the USSR's military use of Guinea. <sup>138/</sup> Not until December 1975, when once again Moscow effectively used Guinea's air and sea facilities in support of its Angolan intervention, did significant discussion of Toure's military relationship with the Soviet Union appear in the press. <sup>139/</sup>

The Conakry raid and its aftermath marked another occasion when the interests of black African states were vigorously defended by the Soviet bloc and opposed by the North Atlantic states. The lack of an overt response from the United States and its allies allowed the Soviet Union to adopt the appearance of effectively deterring a future attack, although my analysis suggests that many other, probably more important factors contributed to the absence of invasion. The Soviet Union gained access to Guinean facilities useful to its broad interests both in Africa and at the strategic level. For its part, the United States helped this process by refusing to openly choose sides in the struggle, though most of the world had concluded Portugal was in error.



### Conclusion

In general, the Soviet Union's use of military power in these two cases was successful in attaining its objectives. Although outcomes favorable to it were largely the product of political and economic factors, Soviet military power did apparently have a reinforcing effect and was used without incurring any significant costs. Of even greater long-range importance, the missions gave the illusion of decisive military influence and thus established with such important observers as President Sekou Toure and the U.S. Navy the presumption of Soviet military potency and credibility. The USSR's success was principally a function of its own sophisticated tactics. The objectives for Soviet naval power were established at a modest level--the return of two Russian ships and the deterrence of an unlikely second Portuguese invasion. Also, these objectives were pursued in an area of the world where the United States had no vital interests at the time. The USSR's subtlety further reduced risk. Naval power was deployed only when the passage of time had helped clarify potential benefits and costs. In the trawlers incident, military signals were resorted to only after the use of diplomatic and economic instruments had failed. The mission to Portuguese Guinea was in highly attractive circumstances, which emerged following the attempted invasion. In neither case was naval power employed in a binding fashion. Instead, force potential was modest and inconspicuous, public information was tightly controlled and restricted, targets

were permitted to draw their own inferences, and port visits were employed to obfuscate intent (Nigeria) or pursue collateral opportunities (Senegal, Sierra Leone).

The lessons Soviet leaders learned from these deployments are difficult to decipher because of the dearth of Soviet commentary. It seems plausible to conclude that the lack of Western reaction to the first Soviet deployment to the Gulf of Guinea in February and March 1969 emphasized for Moscow the limited stakes the NATO allies had in that region and the improbability that they would react militarily to a more daring mission against Portugal in December 1970. A wider range of Soviet conclusions probably resulted from the Guinean experience. Soviet behavior after the Conakry raid suggests a growing awareness that the survival of African clients--notably those committed to internal or external revolution--depended on a more substantial commitment of Soviet armed might than had been previously made in the third world. The loss of Nkrumah and Keita demonstrated this. It may not be coincidental that the year the West Africa Patrol began the USSR also undertook stabilizing actions in Sudan and Somalia. Also, the Guinean experience probably reinforced the importance of avoiding a highly visible military presence in new third world states likely to find dependency on a superpower irksome. Tactics that mitigated this presence included the use of Cuban troops in Guinea, severe restrictions on information, and the deployment of a Soviet tank landing ship. The projected location of a Soviet

naval facility on isolated Tamara Island may have been motivated by concern for Guinean nationalism. Such Soviet solicitude has been rewarded by continued access to Conakry harbor since December 1971. Finally, Moscow may have concluded that external influence on other governments' decisions is likely to be greatest in instances where a brutal, histrionic, and revolutionary leader, like Toure, has little chance of receiving substantial support from the democratic, capitalist Western powers. Regimes like Guinea, Ethiopia, and Uganda, with unsavory international reputations, may well be more vulnerable to Soviet military inducements. It is noteworthy that Guinea's requests since the summer of 1977 for additional economic assistance have been ignored by the Carter administration.

The Ghana and Guinea cases do not indicate that the Russian manipulation of military inducements and threats is, in itself, the source of considerable international influence. Only where the political and economic interests of the targets were compatible with those sought by Moscow was Soviet military power capable of bringing about any identifiable change in behavior. Both Toure and the PAIGC were more receptive to Soviet desires during the Portuguese Guinea war, when the interests of the three parties were convergent. The USSR's inability to obtain routine military access to Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde since their independence is a sign of how little permanent influence Moscow purchased with its extensive war aid, and how quickly the compatibility of two actors' interests can evaporate.

Evidence of successful Soviet coercion is not discernible in these cases. Ghana appeared fully prepared to withstand all Soviet external pressure, including a show of military force, until it had completed a thorough investigation of possible Russian subversion. And so numerous are the alternative domestic and international explanations for Portugal's decision not to reinvade Guinea that only access to Portuguese government files could clarify what weight, if any, was given the implied Russian threat in Lisbon. The general success of Soviet military inducement and coercion and their threat to the United States turns principally on the compatibility of Russian objectives with those of other governments.

Footnotes

\*I am particularly grateful to my research assistant, Melinda Crane, for her diligent and indispensable aid, and to several U.S. officials familiar with West African affairs who have chosen to remain anonymous. None of them are responsible for my interpretations or errors.

1. This is the general interpretation of Soviet behavior in the excellent analysis of this event done by staff members of the Center for Naval Analyses in Arlington, Virginia. In particular, see James M. McConnell, "The Soviet Navy in the Indian Ocean," Professional Paper 77 (CNA, August 1971); Robert G. Weinland, "The Changing Mission Structure of the Soviet Navy," Professional Paper 80 (CNA, November 1971); and Bradford Dismukes, "Soviet Employment of Naval Power for Political Purposes, 1967-75," in Michael McGwire and John McDonnell, eds., Soviet Naval Influence: Domestic and Foreign Dimensions (Praeger, 1977), pp. 485-86.

2. Michael McGwire, "The Evolution of Soviet Naval Policy, 1960-74," in Michael McGwire, Ken Booth, and John McDonnell, eds., Soviet Naval Policy: Objectives and Constraints (Praeger, 1975), p. 529.

3. Michael McGwire, "The Navy and Soviet Oceans Policy," in McGwire and McDonnell, Soviet Naval Influence, p. 145.

4. The material here is taken from Richard T. Ackley, "The Fishing Fleet," in *Ibid.*, pp. 311-20.

5. See Ibid., pp. 311-20; and McGwire, "The Navy and Soviet Oceans Policy," p. 137.
6. Admiral S. G. Gorshkov, "The Development of Soviet Naval Art," Morskoj sbornik, no. 2 (1967), p. 21.
7. Vladimir Davidov, Moscow Radio in Arabic to Algeria, October 12, 1968, quoted in McConnell, "The Soviet Navy in the Indian Ocean," p. 5.
8. Ackley, "Fishing Fleet," p. 319.
9. The best general introduction to these events is Robert Legvold, Soviet Policy in West Africa (Harvard University Press, 1970).
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid., p. 263.
12. Ibid., pp. 307-11; W. Scott Thompson, "Ghana's Foreign Policy Under Military Rule," Africa Report (May-June 1969), p. 3; Christian Science Monitor, August 28, 1968.
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15. V. Kudryavtsev, "African Horizons," Izvestiya, December 21, 1968, p. 4, in Current Digest of the Soviet Press (CDSP), vol. 20, no. 5 (February 21, 1968), p. 18.

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17. New York Times, March 9, 1969.
18. For official USSR policy toward Nkrumah's successors, see Legvold, Soviet Policy, pp. 267-68.
19. West Africa, February 8, 1969, p. 162, and February 15, 1969, p. 192.
20. The argument for Soviet subversion is made by Thompson, "Ghana's Foreign Policy," p. 10. Other writings related to this topic are West Africa, December 28, 1968, p. 1551 and March 29, 1969, p. 367; Africa Contemporary Record, 1968-69, p. 493; Don Carl Steffen, "Little Ghana Takes On the Russians," Life (February 21, 1969), pp. 20-25.
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22. West Africa (October 26, 1968), p. 1270.
23. Africa Research Bulletin (October 1-31, 1968), p. 1222.
24. Africa Research Bulletin (November 1-30, 1968), p. 1250.
25. West Africa (December 7, 1968), pp. 1455-56.
26. Quoted in Dismukes, "Soviet Employment of Naval Power," p. 485.

27. Africa Research Bulletin (October 1-31, 1968), p. 1222.
28. Thompson, "Ghana's Foreign Policy," p. 11.
29. BBC Monitoring Service, Summary of World Broadcasts, pt. 1: USSR (February 18, 1969), p. A4-5.
30. FBIS, Daily Report (February 28, 1969), p. A16.
31. Africa Research Bulletin (March 1-31, 1969), p. 1364; Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., On Watch: A Memoir (Quadrangle, 1976), p. 332; Dismukes, "Soviet Employment of Naval Powers," p. 485.
32. FBIS, Daily Report (February 28, 1969), p. 16.
33. FBIS, Daily Report (December 26, 1968), p. A1.
34. BCC Monitoring Service, Summary of World Broadcasts, pt. 1: USSR (January 21, 1969),
35. A selection of these hostile African reactions can be found in Africa Contemporary Record, 1968-69, pp. 611-18.
36. FBIS, Daily Report (March 5, 1969), p. A36.
37. Dismukes, "Soviet Employment of Naval Power," p. 485.
38. Thompson, "Ghana's Foreign Policy," p. 9.
39. Africa Contemporary Record, 1968-69, p. 492.



40. West Africa (December 28, 1968), p. 1551.
41. Thompson, "Ghana's Foreign Policy," pp. 8, 9.
42. Dismukes, "Soviet Employment of Naval Power," p. 486.
43. Africa Research Bulletin (March 21, 1969), p. 2.
44. Steffen, "Little Ghana Takes On the Russians," p. 22.
45. Christian Science Monitor, March 21, 1969.
46. Africa Research Bulletin (March 1-31, 1969), p. 1364.
47. Africa Contemporary Record, 1968-69; pp. 496-502.
48. Thompson, "Ghana's Foreign Policy," pp. 10, 11.
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50. Zumwalt, On Watch, p. 332.
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72. Keesing's Contemporary Archives (December 26-31, 1970), p. 24354; New York Times, November 28, 1970.

73. New York Times, December 12, 1970.

74. Africa Contemporary Record, 1970-71, p. A52.

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77. This phrase was used by the UN ambassador from Burundi on December 8, 1970. United Nations Security Council Official Records, Meeting no. 1563, p. 11

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## Chapter 13

### ANGOLA AND THE HORN OF AFRICA

by Colin Legum

The Soviet Union took advantage of two historic changes that occurred on the African continent in 1974 to extend its military presence and expand its influence along the southwest Atlantic coast and in the Red Sea area. The first change came as the result of a military coup against the Caetano regime in Lisbon in April 1974, which led to the end of almost five centuries of Portuguese colonialism. There was little conflict over the successor governments in four of Portugal's five African territories, but in Angola three rival liberation movements contested for power in the political vacuum left behind by the Portuguese. The second change came in the Horn of Africa (Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia) in September 1974, after Emperor Haile Selassie had finally been de-throned. A new military regime, the Dergue, took power and committed itself to a Marxist-Leninist revolution.

The USSR became militarily involved in Angola in 1975 and, at about the same time, proposed to the Dergue that it replace the United States as Ethiopia's main source of arms supplies. This proposal was finally accepted by the Dergue in April 1976. Another new dimension of Soviet strategy was the introduction of large numbers of Cuban combat troops to complement the role of Russian military instructors and to handle the more sophisticated weapons under actual battle conditions.

This study of foreign intervention in two African crisis areas focuses largely on Soviet military and political methods with the specific aim of elucidating the purpose and nature of Moscow's strategy and interests in the third world--the vital new factor in the contemporary world balance of power struggle.

As the newest of the world's naval powers, the USSR naturally has an interest in acquiring adequate facilities around the major oceans to enable its naval, merchant, and fishing fleets (as well as its civil airlines and military aircraft) to operate worldwide and to free them from the climatic constraints of their home ports. Furthermore, for their own defense the Russians must be able to neutralize strategic areas to prevent Western powers from bringing their forward positions close to the Soviet borders, as well as to deal with the possibility that nuclear missiles will be launched from U.S. submarines in the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, or the northern Indian Ocean. These areas are also of vital strategic Soviet interest because the USSR needs to cover its Far Eastern front in all seasons against the possibility of war with China or to go to the assistance of its allies in Southeast Asia. Yet this aim of acquiring naval facilities is never mentioned in Soviet political statements or in the media; on the contrary, that it plays any part in USSR policy is vehemently denied. This attitude is in marked contrast to the frank assertions about the Soviet navy's need for and interest in acquiring naval and air facilities around the world by the navy's military planners and writers--notably by the creator of the modern Soviet navy, Admiral of the Fleet Sergei G. Gorshkov.<sup>1</sup> There can be no question that Soviet policies in the Horn of Africa were de-

terminated by the age-old interest in access to Red Sea ports.

The Soviet wish not to seem to be pursuing a typical superpower interest no doubt explains the covertness of the pursuit. How to avoid being seen by the third world as being no different from "the imperialists" is a major USSR concern. Gorshkov's speeches and writings stress the differences between the Soviet naval role in political crises and that of the "imperialist navies." This concern is also reflected in discussions among Russian strategic planners on such issues as the deployment of ground forces in third world conflict situations, where they may be regarded as indispensable to ensure the effectiveness of military aid supplied by the Warsaw Pact countries.<sup>2/</sup> Since Moscow remains strongly opposed to using Russian or other "white" troops from Eastern Europe as combat troops in the third world, this missing element in Soviet strategy has been the subject of considerable debate and controversy in Russian military circles. When the need for such ground forces arose, first in Angola and later in Ethiopia, the Cubans supplied the "nonwhite," or third world, element required by Soviet strategy.

The question is whether the Cubans can always be expected to fill the breach when the fulfillment of Soviet strategic interests require it, or whether they will respond only in situations where Moscow's and Havana's interests coincide. In other words, are the Cubans merely Russian henchmen or are they capable of playing an independent role in third world situations?<sup>3/</sup> Their major role in the two conflicts described in this chapter gives no firm answer to this question but tends to oppose the view (as stated, for example, by the Chinese) that the Cubans are simply "Russian mercenaries." There is also the further question of

the limits of Cuban manpower and resources.

As an ideological power, the USSR is also able to pursue its state interests by championing causes that attract allies to its side from among third world anti-imperialist "progressive" elements. For example, Soviet foreign policy assumes responsibility for contributing to the "solidarity of the progressive forces in the international working-class movement" and supporting "genuine progressive revolutionary movements and movements of national liberation." These commitments enable the USSR to decide when--and how far--it should involve itself in any particular conflict in the third world.

A more recent development in Soviet policy is its acceptance of an overt commitment to help promote and consolidate Marxist-Leninist regimes oriented toward Moscow. Such a policy not only intensifies Sino-Soviet rivalry, but also disturbs nationalists in the third world who, though anti-imperialist, are usually anti-Marxist too. Moscow did not try to defend its intervention in Angola on the ground that it was assisting to consolidate a Marxist-Leninist regime there (although it subsequently did just that); but this was one of the three reasons it gave to justify its intervention in Ethiopia. Perhaps the most significant aspect of the USSR's role in the Horn of Africa is that for the first time it openly sought to promote and consolidate a Communist revolution outside Eastern Europe.

The USSR loses no opportunity to try to diminish the influence of the Western powers in the third world (especially in areas where it has strategic interests of its own); but its policies toward the third world show an even greater desire to undermine the position of the People's

Republic of China than that of the West. In the case of Angola, evidence suggests that Sino-Soviet rivalry was a crucial determinant of Soviet policy.

#### ANGOLA

The new regime in Lisbon which seized power on April 25, 1974, led by General Antonio de Spínola, fixed November 11, 1975, as the date for independence in Angola, although the question of who was to rule remained in contention among three rival forces. Each had received external backing from different sources in the period of armed struggle (1958-74).<sup>4/</sup>

#### The Rival Angolan Parties

The Union for the Total National Liberation of Angola (UNITA), led by Dr. Jonas Savimbi, had received the least foreign aid. Despite appeals to it, Peking had withheld aid until late in 1974, and its first consignment of arms sent from Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) never arrived. UNITA's power base was in the south, along the Namibian frontier, among the Ovimbundu people, who are by far the most populous group in the country.

The Front for the National Liberation of Angola (FNLA), led by Holden Roberto, was supported by the Bakongo people along Zaire's frontier. It received most of its support either directly from or through Zaire. For a time at the beginning of the Kennedy administration, some American aid was secretly channeled to the FNLA; this did not last long, because of Portuguese pressure on its NATO ally. Nevertheless, the CIA maintained contact with Roberto.<sup>5/</sup> The FNLA was very much a

client of Zaire, whose President Mobutu saw it primarily as an ally and an instrument for his foreign policy. This relationship contributed importantly to the subsequent course of the power struggle and probably also to the level of foreign military intervention. In 1973 the Chinese began to supply arms and to train FNLA forces in their base camps in Zaire. North Korea, which had a training program for Zaire, also helped train FNLA forces.

The Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), led by a Marxist poet, Dr. Agostinho Neto, had received Chinese military aid from 1958 to 1974, as well as economic and political support from some Western sources, notably Sweden, and from "support groups" in Western Europe and North America. But its main support came from the USSR, Cuba, and Yugoslavia. Soviet relations with the MPLA were not always smooth, partly because of Neto's suspicious personality, and partly because of splits within its ranks. Neto's two staunchest allies were the clandestine Portuguese Communist party (with whose leaders he was in prison in Lisbon for a time) and the Cubans. The MPLA's support lay among the Mbundu people in central Angola, but especially among the urban working classes and the intelligentsia, many of them Afro-Portuguese (mestizos). The MPLA was the only Angolan movement with Marxists in its leadership.

A mission sent by the Liberation Committee of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) early in 1975 to determine the relative strengths of the three movements reported that UNITA enjoyed the greatest popular support, followed by the FNLA with the MPLA having the least. 6/ Despite its large popular following, UNITA was militarily the weakest



because of its failure to attract external support. In mid-1975 it joined the FNLA in a reluctant alliance, which assured an anti-Communist character because of Soviet-Cuban support of the MPLA. When they failed to get Western military support to match that given by the Communist nations to the MPLA, Savimbi and Roberto sought South Africa's help. This led to the South African-FNLA-UNITA-Zaire operation.

#### External Actors and Their Interests

Throughout the Angolan crisis (early 1974 to early 1976) the OAU's policy, with little significant opposition from its members, was to support the idea of a coalition government to be formed by all three parties at independence. The OAU insisted that none of the parties was entitled to separate recognition; and it called on all African and foreign powers not to interfere in the country's internal affairs. This remained OAU policy until after the South African army intervened openly on the side of UNITA and the FNLA in late 1975. However, this policy was still fully operative when the Russians and Cubans first became militarily involved in early 1975.

The OAU had two main objectives in Angola: to avert a civil war following the Portuguese withdrawal and to prevent foreign intervention. This explains its consensus on the importance of recognizing all three rival Angolan movements as being genuine nationalist forces, and its insistence that all were equally entitled to share in the government at independence. However, the OAU's attempts to discourage foreign intervention failed--largely because one of its members, Zaire, had a state interest in the future of its neighbor. Not only were Zaire's armed forces used to support the FNLA in Angola, but President Mobutu also

worked strenuously to persuade others in Africa and abroad (especially the United States and China) to arm the FNLA.

Mobutu's objective was to prevent the extension of Soviet influence on his borders because of his own experience of Russian intervention in Zaire's affairs during Patrice Lumumba's regime in the early 1960s and again during the rebellion against his rule in the mid-1960s. Mobutu sought to convince the Western powers and the anti-Communist states in Africa (including South Africa) that they all had a common interest in keeping the Soviet Union out of Africa--an argument that had appealed to the Chinese in 1973.

Mobutu had two other interests in the Angolan conflict: continued access to the Benguela railway, which normally carried the bulk of the mineral exports from Shaba (Katanga) province to the sea; and the possibility of getting direct or indirect control of the oil-rich Angolan province of Cabinda, which forms an enclave within Zaire and the Congo. Mobutu insisted that "Cabinda is not Angola; it is separated by Zaire."7/

Zambia, another of Angola's neighbors, also played a significant role in the conflict. Although President Kenneth Kaunda supported the OAU stand of support for all three Angolan movements, he developed close relations with UNITA after the MPLA had involved the Russians and the Cubans directly in the conflict. Zambia insisted on "non-intervention by foreign powers in any shape or form in African affairs."8/ Kaunda's speeches contrasted China's "model relations" (with Africa) with those of the Soviet Union; and he warned against the danger of "the tiger and his cubs" (Russia and Cuba) stalking the continent.9/ Like Zaire, Zambia also had a major economic-strategic interest in the Benguela railway, over

which a large part of its copper exports normally cross to the sea.

Former President Idi Amin of Uganda, a close political ally of Mobutu, was chairman of the OAU in 1975. In this role he was able to exercise considerable influence over the organization's policies. He used his position to maintain the African consensus despite strong Soviet pressure on him.

South Africa decided on military intervention in Angola for two reasons. First, it did not wish to see the growth of Soviet influence in the continent, especially not so close to its borders. Second, it was concerned about the security of Namibia (South-West Africa), the international territory it controls on the border of Angola. The South-West Africa People's Organization of Namibia (SWAPO) used Angola's territory to make guerrilla incursions into Namibia, even during the time of Portuguese rule. After the Portuguese withdrawal, SWAPO moved its main training camps into southern Angola and was able to get direct supplies of Russian weapons. Later it was also able to get Cuban military training for its guerrilla forces.

U.S. policy toward the Angolan crisis seems to have been largely dictated by four major interests: to avoid any new major foreign involvement, reflecting the post-Vietnam mood of the country and especially of its legislators; to deny any significant political or military gains to the Russians in Africa--but principally through diplomatic means and within the understood ground rules governing detente; to support American friends in Africa, especially President Mobutu of Zaire; and to defend an important American economic interest in Angola, Gulf Oil in Cabinda.

U.S. actions did not conform with all these objectives, even before

the extent of Cuba's military intervention became known. Clandestine aid to the FNLA was apparently resumed as early as July 1974, within months of the coup in Lisbon, in response to strong pressure from Mobutu. The CIA station in the area, based in Zaire, was actively engaged in covert action,<sup>10/</sup> which the Ford administration sought to supplement by an emergency aid program also channeled through Zaire. The Congress did not allow this, however.

Soon after the Forty Committee, the top-level U.S. review board that approves covert operations abroad, voted about \$300,000 for a program of covert political support for the FNLA in January 1975, an inter-agency National Security Council Task Force on Angola was set up by NSC staff directive.<sup>11/</sup> Although the task force strongly opposed military intervention in Angola, President Ford in mid-July sanctioned a CIA action-plan for a \$14 million covert action program to buy arms for the FNLA and UNITA.<sup>12/</sup> Also in July, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger requested Congress to vote a \$79 million emergency aid program for Zaire. His proposal met with considerable opposition, especially from the Senate, which adopted an amendment introduced by Senator John Tunney in late December 1975 opposing further covert aid to Angola. One other significant U.S. action was a State Department instruction to Gulf Oil on December 19, 1975, to suspend royalty payments of \$125 million to the MPLA-controlled Finance Ministry.

The immediate Soviet objective in Angola was clear-cut: to ensure the victory of the MPLA as the successor government to Portugal. With the collapse of Portuguese colonialism the Kremlin was in a strong position to ask, "Where were the friends of the Angolan people in all

those long years while the Angolans fought their foreign oppressors?"13/

The initial Soviet position on Angola was to favor the right of all three rival Angolan movements to participate in the transitional government. Their position changed early in 1975. Soviet writers later ascribed the shift to a new turn of events in Angola for which "the blame lies with the leaders of the secessionist alignments which unleashed an armed struggle with active support from outside."14/ The official Soviet line was that there could be no talk of a civil war in Angola; it was a "war of intervention" forced on the country by the "splittists" and their foreign allies.15/ Accordingly they described their policy as assistance for "Angola's legitimate government, based on the internationalist principle of supporting the nations' struggle for freedom and independence."16/

This position brought the USSR into open conflict with the declared policy of the OAU. Soviet policy also stirred other African reactions, principally from Zambia's President Kaunda, who warned that "assistance to liberation movements must not be an excuse for establishing hegemony in Africa. In this respect we should learn from the People's Republic of China."17/

Sino-Soviet rivalry was a major feature of Moscow's approach to the Angolan conflict. Moscow put much of the blame for what had happened in Angola on the Chinese. A typical charge was that "the Maoists sent weapons, money and military instructors to Angola. They sent them not to the legal government recognized by many countries in Africa, Asia and other continents, but to those separatist elements which embarked on

an armed struggle against the government. . . . Angolans are killed in their own land by Chinese arms."18/ Moscow repeatedly accused the Chinese of pursuing world hegemonistic ambitions.19/

Cuban objectives in Angola essentially reflected Fidel Castro's view of his country's "tricontinental role"--with Cuba as the vanguard of revolution in the third world. The extent to which this Cuban interest meshes with Soviet interests will be considered presently; but considerable evidence supports the view that the Cubans seek to pursue an independent role in the affairs of the third world, whatever their ties with Moscow or their dependence on Soviet economic and military support.20/ The popular view of the Cubans as "puppets of Moscow" or the Chinese view of them as "Russian mercenaries" is not borne out by available evidence. However, this does not contradict another view that the Cuban role in both Angola and Ethiopia helped carry out Soviet objectives, which could not have been achieved without the active combatant role of Cuban soldiers.

Cuba's explanation of its role in Angola was supplied by its foreign minister, Carlos Rafael Rodriguez:

Look, it's obvious that we have a close relationship with the Russians. But when we first sent troops to Angola we did not rely on a possible Soviet participation in the operation. We started it in a risky, almost improbable fashion, with a group of people packed in a ship and in those British Britannia aircraft of ours. Eventually, the operation was coordinated with the Russians, who were beginning to send military supplies to help President Agostinho's MPLA government in Angola. But the thing started off as a purely Cuban operation.21/

Fidel Castro claimed that Cuba's cooperation with Africa was the natural "result of our principles, our ideology, our convictions and our blood."<sup>22</sup>/ It is therefore not without significance that the Cuban exercise in Angola was given the code name Operation Carlotta, after a female slave who had led a black revolt in Cuba in 1843. The "blackness" of many Cubans was especially useful in this operation since they blended more easily into the African milieu. A conspicuous number of the first Cuban troops to arrive in Angola were black.

Cuba's modern connections with Africa go back to 1959, when Ernesto "Che" Guevara first established links with the Front for the National Liberation of Algeria in Cairo; but the closest ties were with the anti-Portuguese liberation movements, especially that between Guevara and Amilcar Cabral, the charismatic hero-martyr of Guinea-Bissau. Except for the Mozambicans, all the anti-Portuguese movements had close links with Cuba, where they went for military training and education.

The objective of the People's Republic of China in Angola was primarily to assist the liberation movements in the struggle against colonialism; this was in conformity with its international role in the third world. China began to support the MPLA in 1958 as the "progressive element" in the anti-Portuguese struggle, and continued to supply it with arms until 1974 even though relations were strained--partly because of the gradual ascendancy of pro-Moscow elements in the MPLA but, more important, because of China's decision in 1973 to arm and train the FNLA. (China, as mentioned, had refused to supply weapons to UNITA until late 1974.)

China's involvement with the FNLA came about in response to an African initiative. When the struggle against the Portuguese in Angola slackened in 1973--mainly because of troubles within the MPLA, low morale in the FNLA, and lack of arms for UNITA--Tanzania's President Nyerere and Zaire's President Mobutu decided to ask China to train the FNLA. The Chinese agreed to send more than a hundred military instructors and supplies to the FNLA's camps in Zaire.

Unlike Russia, China responded positively to the OAU's initial policy declaration requesting all external forces to stay out of the Angolan power struggle. Almost three weeks before Angola's independence--on October 27, 1975--China withdrew all its military instructors from the FNLA camps.<sup>23/</sup> This move was badly received by the FNLA and Mobutu.

China saw the Angolan crisis almost exclusively in the context of its quarrel with the USSR. It blamed the Russians for "starting the war in Angola";<sup>24/</sup> criticized them for having deliberately created a split among the liberation movements and for sending large quantities of arms to only one side; and accused them of "wantonly slandering and attacking the other two movements--and thus single-handedly provoking the civil war in Angola."<sup>25/</sup>

The Peking view was that the Russians' actions in Angola "fully revealed their ferocious features as social imperialists." China also accused them of engaging in a "scramble for hegemony in Africa, the aim being to place strategically-important Angola, which is rich in natural resources, in their neocolonialist sphere of influence."<sup>26/</sup>

#### The Course of Events

The Alvor Accord for independence signed by the Portuguese govern-



ment with the FNLA, UNITA, and the MPLA on January 15, 1975, pledged the four signatories to cooperate in a transitional government until independence, which was set for November 11, 1975. The aim was to produce a smooth transfer of power, with Portugal acting as chairman over two interim bodies in which the three rival Angolan movements were equally represented. Security was to remain the responsibility of the Portuguese forces.

The Alvor Accord was implemented on January 31, 1975, but quickly broke down as the mistrustful leaders of the rival parties maneuvered for position.

Fighting broke out in the Angolan capital, Luanda, on February 13, 1975, in a clash between two wings of the MPLA--Neto's faction and the "Eastern Revolt" faction led by Daniel Chipenda. (The latter had received Moscow's support for a time during 1973.) When Neto's supporters succeeded in driving Chipenda out of the capital, he decided to join the FNLA. As Chipenda had been the only prominent Ovimbundu leader in the MPLA, his defection critically weakened the movement's ability to win control over southern Angola, the territory held by UNITA. In the next few weeks fighting broke out between the FNLA and the MPLA, which rapidly escalated in March and April. The fighting at this early stage did not involve UNITA. The initiative during much of this first period lay with the FNLA, and the MPLA found itself heavily on the defensive.

The military strength of the Angolan rival forces in the first half of 1975 was roughly the following. The MPLA had 6,000 men but armed inferiority to the FNLA. They also had the support of 3,500-6,000 former

members of the Katangese gendarmerie. The FNLA had 15,000 men, assisted by regular Zaire soldiers in FNLA uniforms. They were well armed. Besides Zaire army weapons, they had received 450 tons of Chinese weapons in 1974.<sup>27/</sup> UNITA had at most 1,000 men, with few sophisticated weapons.

UNITA's forces at Lobito came under MPLA attack for the first time in late May. In the first week of June, the MPLA and the FNLA were engaged in heavy fighting in the northern and eastern parts of the country, as well as in the capital and in the Cabinda enclave—the principal oil area. Except for Cabinda, where the FNLA was defeated, no side showed clear military superiority in the fighting in this early phase. However, the MPLA had strengthened its position in the capital sufficiently to turn its guns against UNITA in early June.

May and June brought the first clear evidence of external intervention in Angola: the FNLA was being openly assisted by Zaire army units, with clandestine support from the United States.<sup>28/</sup> At the same time, the MPLA's rivals claimed that it was receiving Soviet military aid, which later evidence supported.

The OAU took a firm hand in attempting to reconcile the rivals. Under President Jomo Kenyatta's chairmanship, they signed the Nakuru agreement on June 21. But by July 9 fighting had started again and rapidly assumed the proportions of a civil war. It resulted in Angola being divided roughly into three arenas, each controlled by one of the rival forces.<sup>29/</sup>

The first six months of 1975 proved crucial in the struggle for power. The FNLA started in the strongest position—with the largest armed forces and the strongest regional backer, Zaire. But it was unable

to use its apparent superiority effectively, mainly because it lacked real popular support in its areas of operations, including the capital and Cabinda. UNITA, on the other hand, was unable to mobilize its substantial popular support effectively because it lacked military supplies and sufficient trained fighting cadres.

The MPLA was rapidly able to improve military organization and to increase its supply of weapons so that it could drive both its rivals from the capital, establish its control over the center of the country (running east from Luanda to the Zambian border), and confine the FNLA to the northwest corner of the country despite the latter's buildup to 17,000 troops, many of them Zairean soldiers.

By the beginning of August, the MPLA was strong enough to launch a second front offensive against UNITA's forces, forcing them to retreat from a string of southern cities--notably the three ports of Lobito, Mocamedes, and Benguela. By the end of the month the MPLA controlled twelve of the sixteen provincial capitals as well as Cabinda. During this period the Portuguese army had virtually given up trying to keep the opposing forces apart, confining themselves mainly to controlling arms being flown into Luanda.

UNITA's loss of the ports in the south and inadequate air fields made it difficult for it to bring in supplies, especially since Zambia, though strongly sympathetic to Savimbi, was then still complying with the OAU's guidelines and so would not allow arms for UNITA to pass across its territory. The route through South Africa and Namibia had not yet been opened up. Only the MPLA had been able to attract and absorb large additional supplies of arms between March and July. It had also acquired

the strategic and psychological advantage of substantially controlling the capital.

The MPLA's growing military superiority forced UNITA to enter into an unwilling alliance with the FNLA in July--much against Savimbi's wishes, since he saw his own movement as a third force, capable of winning a major share of the power in a coalition government. Nor did he like the FNLA's policies, and he mistrusted those of Roberto's chief backer, President Mobutu. But in adversity he accepted the need to coordinate his military efforts with those of the FNLA.

Several international developments during the crucial first eight months of 1975 explain why the local balance of power changed so completely.

When the Forty Committee decided to provide \$300,000 in support for the FNLA, it earmarked the money for political action, not for the purchase of arms.<sup>30/</sup> Neither the Russians nor the Cubans seemed to be shipping arms directly into Angola at this time, apparently having ceased to do so after the military coup in Portugal in April 1974. They had provided the MPLA with arms estimated at \$55 million during the period of the armed struggle (1958-74).<sup>31/</sup>

Beginning March 25, a relay of thirty Russian cargo planes arrived in Brazzaville (Congo) with military equipment, which was later shipped either into Cabinda or to Luanda.<sup>32/</sup> This was the beginning of the use of Brazzaville as a staging post for the buildup of Soviet material and Cuban forces. According to Kissinger,<sup>33/</sup> the USSR supplied \$200 million worth of arms between April and June.

In April 100 tons of arms were flown directly to MPLA-held airfields in central Angola from Dar es Salaam. A chartered Bristol Britannia, being flown to Serpa Pinto by a British crew, was forced to land at Luso because of bad weather. The Portuguese at first confiscated the arms but later released them to the MPLA. Sympathetic Portuguese soldiers also allowed two Yugoslav vessels to unload arms for the MPLA in Luanda. In May and June four Soviet ships unloaded arms, as did two ships from East Germany and one from Algeria.<sup>34/</sup> In June a Cypriot-registered ship, Sun Rise, was prevented by Portuguese troops from unloading arms at Luanda. It went on to Pointe-Noire (Congo), where it discharged its cargo.

The Cubans appear to have made their decision to send military instructors to Angola in April 1975, after a visit by an MPLA envoy, P. Jorge, who was sent to Havana to report on the MPLA's difficult position in Luanda after the FNLA attacks of March. During this visit Castro seems to have decided on a change in Cuba's intervention, switching from supplying military advisers and instructors only to providing ground forces. Jorge's mission was to explain to Castro that the MPLA cadres did not have enough time to familiarize themselves with the sophisticated weapons supplied by the USSR and needed Cubans to man tanks and artillery in the actual military operations. Although the Cubans were introduced as "advisers" (according to Jorge <sup>35/</sup>), they became involved in the fighting at Caxito as early as the end of May, when for the first time tanks were used by the MPLA forces. A Cuban spokesman later confirmed that a decision had been made in May or June to send 230 military advisers

to establish training camps in territory held by the MPLA at Benguela, Cabinda, Henrique de Carvalho, and Salazaro. 36/ This figure corresponds with information gathered by the CIA. 37/

By July heavy supplies of arms and an increasing number of foreign military instructors were reaching Angola; this coincided with the successful military initiatives launched on July 14 by the MPLA. 38/

About a hundred Chinese and thirty North Korean instructors were still training FNLA units in their camp at Kinkuzu inside Zaire. Another forty to fifty Cuban advisers arrived in Angola in early July, via Congo-Brazzaville, bringing the total number of Cubans to three hundred. 39/ FNLA sources reported the arrival of fifty Cubans in Brazzaville on July 25 to assist in handling the Russian arms arriving there. UNITA's commanders first saw Cubans in operation at the fighting for the port of Lobito in mid-August 1975. 40/

Zaire sent a commando company and an armored-car squadron across the border and into active combat in mid-July. 41/ President Ford decided on July 17 to act on a CIA action-plan, which provided for UNITA and the FNLA to acquire arms with funds channeled through Zaire. 42/ Meanwhile, Holden Roberto had sent Daniel Chipenda to Namibia in July for talks with General Hendrik van den Bergh, chief of the South African Bureau of State Security (BOSS). Although U.S. intelligence reports suggested that South Africa had begun to support both the FNLA and UNITA in July, 43/ the official report from South Africa claimed that its support had only begun in September. 44/ What seems likely is that South African support of the FNLA began in July but that its collaboration with UNITA did not begin until September. 45/

The crucial round in the power struggle started in mid-August 1975 and ended in a major MPLA political victory on November 11, the date of independence. This last phase saw a serious intensification of the civil war, less disguised foreign intervention, and the beginning of the breakup of the OAU's consensus on Angola. During this three-month period, according to official U.S. estimates, 46/ twenty-seven shiploads of military equipment and thirty to forty supply missions were flown in by Soviet AN-22 military cargo planes. Most of this equipment was off-loaded in the Congo and transshipped from there to Angola before independence. The number of Soviet military advisers in Angola was estimated at 170 to 200.

In mid-August larger numbers of foreign troops began to participate in the fighting. Two additional Zaire paratroop companies were committed to action in Angola in support of the FNLA. 47/ At the same time South African troops--which had moved from late June to early July into southern Angola to protect the Ruacana and Calueque pumping stations--occupied the Cunene Dam complex, 48/ which supplies Namibia with electricity. One Cuban taken prisoner by the FNLA gave details of his unit's arrival from Brazzaville in August 1975, at least a month after leaving Cuba. 49/ There can be no doubt that the first Cuban combat soldiers arrived in Brazzaville before the South Africans had sent their first small force across the border to defend the Ruacana installations in July 1975. From Brazzaville, they were quickly sent in batches to Cabinda and to other points in Angola. 50/

In September U.S. military aid began to reach the FNLA. Soviet 122-millimeter rockets were used for the first time in fighting north of

Luanda. In the middle of the month two more Zaire battalions were sent across the border into Angola.

Three Cuban merchant ships left Cuba for Angola in early September. 51/ A fortnight later the Congo's President Marien Ngouabi arrived in Havana and signed a bilateral agreement whose terms were unspecified; but a joint communique issued September 19, at the end of his mission, expressed Congolese-Cuban solidarity for Angola's "heroic combatants." A Cuban delegation arrived in the Congo in early October, coinciding with the arrival of the first Cuban troopship, the Vietnam Heroica, which carried several hundred armed units. Most of the troops were transported to Angola in a local coaster or overland to Cabinda. At least one of the Cuban ships disembarked troops directly at Porto Amboim, south of Luanda, where the Cubans had established another training camp. Some Cubans went to the training camp at Benguela; others appear to have linked up with MPLA units moving toward Nova Lisboa from Lobito, where they made their first contact with South African forces at Norron de Matos on October 6. 52/ The Cuban combat troops that began to arrive after September are believed to have largely tank troops drawn from the independent armored division of the Cuban armed forces, sometimes referred to as the Special Reserve of the Commander in Chief. 53/

Toward the end of the month South Africa was shipping material to the FNLA and UNITA and had established a training base for the FNLA in south-east Angola. 54/ According to an official account, the South African Defence Force (SADF) sent an officer to Silva Porto on September 24, 1975, to help plan an operation to stop the MPLA march to Nova Lisboa. His assignment was to advise UNITA on the training and reorganization of its



forces and to hold Nova Lisboa "at all costs." A team of eighteen instructors, with three antitank weapons and a few machine guns, joined the liaison officer. The MPLA march was halted on October 6. Meanwhile, according to the same report, it soon became obvious that "the struggle, with strong Cuban support, began to take on a conventional colour." 55/

For a short time in October it seemed as if the tide had begun to turn against the MPLA when South African forces, spearheading a UNITA-FNLA offensive, made rapid progress across south-central Angola to within seventy miles of Luanda.

Also in October, the U.S. State Department asked Congress to approve a \$79 million military aid program for Zaire, which had remained stalled since early 1974, when President Mobutu had expelled the American ambassador. At the end of the month, Zaire sent another battalion to the south. The number of Cuban ground troops was estimated to have increased to about 3,000. 56/

With the final outcome in the balance, reinforcements of men and materiel were rushed to both sides in the last days of October and the first weeks of November. From late October, aircraft of Soviet Military Transport Aviation were used in the airlift. American supplies were being flown in via Zaire by U.S. C-130 military transport aircraft. Dr. Neto later confirmed that the Russians had supplied him with MIG 21s, T-34 and T-54 tanks, APCs, antitank and SAM-7 missiles, rocket launchers, and AK-47 automatic rifles; he did not mention the 122-millimeter rocket launchers (the Stalin Organs). 57/ (No Angolans could fly the

MIGs, so the presumption is that they were flown by Cubans.) A mixed Zaire-FNLA force failed in an attempt to capture Cabinda. The Cuban airlift was increased to as many as five troop flights a week, and there was an increase in the sealift. 58/ The big Cuban buildup started on November 7, when 650 commando troops were flown to Angola via Barbados, Guinea-Bissau, and Congo. The Cubans held up the South African-led UNITA-FNLA strike force on the outer perimeter of Luanda. According to South Africa's P. W. Botha (then defense minister, now prime minister), the strike force was prevented from attempting to capture the capital by American pressure. Further operations were temporarily stopped on November 11 "after mediation by go-betweens," according to the official South African report, which is silent about who the mediators were, though Prime Minister J. E. Vorster strongly hinted that the United States was involved. 59/ At that time, the UNITA-FNLA South African forces held the general line north from Lobito to Santa Coimba, and from there east to Luso. The South African forces were officially said to consist of about three hundred adviser-instructors and personnel and a limited number of armored cars, mortars, and antitank weapons.

Two independent republics were proclaimed in Angola on November 11, 1975--the People's Republic of Angola by the MPLA in Luanda, and the Social Democratic Republic of Angola by UNITA and the FNLA in Huambo. The MPLA government was at once recognized by a dozen African countries, the Soviet bloc, and Cuba; the republic at Huambo received no official recognition.

Six days later, on November 17, the FNLA-UNITA-South African forces undertook a three-pronged attack against Luanda, but it was easily con-

ained. By then, Cuban combat troops numbered an estimated 15,000. On November 27 a Cuban artillery regiment and a battalion of motorized and field troops landed on the Angolan coast after a sea crossing of twenty days in two cargo ships, each carrying 1,000 men plus armored vehicles, guns, and explosives. According to Garcia Marquez' account, 60/ more troops and weapons were flown into Angola over the next few months in "up to a hundred flights." He claims that the Cubans were flying "blind" without meteorological information and flying low to save fuel. The first air route they took necessitated refueling at Bridgetown, Barbados, but this was stopped because of U.S. representations to the Barbados authorities. An attempt to fly via Guyana also had to be abandoned when American oil companies refused to provide the necessary fuel. For a time, flights were routed through Cape Verde, but, according to Marquez, this had to be stopped to "avoid bringing harm to a defenceless country."

The first significant sign of any naval deployment appeared in late November 1975 when an Alligator-class amphibious landing ship (LST) was sent from Conakry (Guinea) to Pointe-Noire (Congo), where it stayed from December 1 to December 6 before patrolling outside Angolan waters. It carried a full complement of naval infantry as well as vehicles, equipped with antitank and antiair missiles. 61/ The immediate reason for this deployment appears to have been the FNLA attack on the Cabinda enclave in mid-November, which also posed a threat to Russian merchant ships unloading arms for the MPLA less than twenty miles away at Pointe-Noire. In synchronization with the FNLA's strike, Zaire had moved three of its naval patrol boats into the area. The largest of these, a Swift-type patrol boat, carried 81-millimeter mortars and 40-millimeter grenade

launchers, which can severely damage a merchant vessel. In early January 1976 the LST was joined in its operating area by a Kotlin-class guided missile destroyer (DDG) and an oil tanker. They had been diverted from routine operations in the eastern Mediterranean in December and had entered the Gulf of Guinea on their way south. The destroyer was followed out of the Mediterranean on January 4, 1976, by a Kresta II-class guided-missile cruiser; it too headed for Conakry--at above normal transit speed.

These Soviet naval movements brought several warnings from Washington. On January 6 official sources registered "grave concern" at the Soviet naval activities. 62/ The following day a White House spokesman announced that Soviet naval deployments to Angolan waters were "further evidence of a continuing Soviet involvement in an area where they have no legitimate interests." These protests were met by a Tass denial that any Soviet warships were in Angolan waters. In fact, the LST and the destroyer did immediately move further north. The former took up a surveillance position in the Gulf of Guinea, and the latter proceeded to Conakry, where it joined the cruiser.

In January and February Soviet naval surveillance of U.S. warships was intensified, both at the outlets from the Mediterranean and in mid-Atlantic, where the Vertikal, an intelligence collector, joined the LST. It is also possible that a Juliett-class cruise-missile submarine was involved in the Atlantic surveillance operation. It put into Conakry in February. The USSR also deployed TU-95D naval reconnaissance aircraft over the Atlantic, operating from Conakry and Havana. After mid-February there were no significant Soviet naval operations in the area.

Soviet naval deployment in the Angolan crisis was probably motivated by several considerations. First, there is little doubt that the LST was sent to Pointe-Noire in late November in response to a potential FNLA and Zaire land and naval threat to Russian vessels off-loading supplies at the port, as well as to Cabinda, where the MPLA was being assisted by Cubans and reinforced with Russian arms. A naval response would have been appropriate to the kind of risks being run at that time by the Soviet Union. Subsequent use of Soviet naval units seems to have been in pursuit of three main purposes: political, intelligence gathering, and support for the air bridge, especially from Cuba. 63/

The USSR appears to have had several political-strategic objectives: to deter the small Zaire navy from interfering with the off-loading of arms from Russian merchant ships at Pointe-Noire; to discourage South Africa from using its navy to block access to Angolan ports; and to signal opposition to any possible use the United States might make of its navy to impede the air bridge or the sea bridge from Cuba to the Congo and Angola, or from the Soviet Union, via Conakry, to the Congo. A natural consequence of these aims would be to create a more general impression in Angola and elsewhere of the degree of Moscow's commitment to support the MPLA.

In early January 1976 the USSR made two Aeroflot IL-62s available to Cuba. These aircraft transported troops from Holquin to Luanda, stopping at either Bissau or, more probably, Conakry for refueling. The flights continued from January 7 to January 21, carrying troops at a rate of 200 a day. The flights were resumed in late February, but at a lower rate. Troops were also arriving at Pointe-Noire by ship.

South Africa's involvement increased substantially after Angolan independence. More battle groups were formed to bring their strength up to just under 2,000 (logistic element included) shortly before withdrawal on January 22, 1976. As a countermove to the Cuban buildup--and especially to the 122-millimeter rocket launchers--140-millimeter guns were introduced into the fighting: "this caused chaos among the Cuban ranks." 64/ The FNLA-Zaire troops failed to achieve much military success despite South African support. But UNITA managed, with South African support, to continue the military struggle, which, despite a sharp increase in Cuban troops to 19,000 in 1975-77, was still continuing in 1979. According to South Africa's official account: "The allied FNLA/UNITA forces, supported by South African forces, could have conquered the whole of Angola, but Dr. Savimbi insisted that he was only interested in controlling his traditional area because he was determined to reach a settlement with the MPLA to the advantage of Angola." 65/

After South Africa's withdrawal, UNITA and the FNLA had to rely on an army of about 1,200 foreign mercenaries, paid for with CIA funds. 66/ Meanwhile, however, opinion in the OAU had swung strongly toward the MPLA after it became known that both UNITA and the FNLA were collaborating with the South African army. In February 1976 the OAU member states divided equally on a proposal to recognize the MPLA regime, but before the end of the year the great majority of African states, as well as other states around the world, had decided to recognize the regime's legality.

#### Soviet Behavior

Soviet actions in Angola in the crucial period from the coup in Lisbon (April 1974) to the territory's independence (November 1975) suggest

not a carefully thought out strategy but rather a rapid response to changing conditions and to new challenges, developing from a low-level response (April 1974 to early 1975) through a medium-level response (March to June and July 1975) to a high-level response (July and August 1975 to early 1976).

There is no lack of evidence, however, to show that the Soviet Union was carrying out a long-term strategy (involving both Portugal and its African territories) to create opportunities that might be exploited as they occurred. But it would be wrong to describe such a policy as opportunistic: a more accurate description would be pragmatic and tactical.

The long-term planning of the Soviet Union's African strategy is shown by its consistent support of the national liberation movements on the continent. In the case of Angola, support for the anti-Portuguese movements had a double purpose, since Moscow was at the same time assisting Alvaro Cunhal's clandestine Communist party to overthrow the Salazar-Caetano regimes: by supporting the anti-Portuguese liberation struggles it could (and, as it turned out, did) contribute to the overthrow of the Portuguese political system.

Having begun to support the MPLA in 1958, Khrushchev publicly predicted its success in 1961.<sup>67/</sup> Despite the vicissitudes of Moscow's relations with Neto, its support throughout went to one or the other of the factional leaders in the MPLA. Neto also enjoyed Cunhal's support and personal friendship. Cunhal is believed to have introduced Neto to Moscow on his first trip there in 1964. <sup>68/</sup>

Angola's geopolitical position was undoubtedly an important Soviet consideration. A sympathetic regime there could be expected to assist in influencing developments across its borders in neighboring Zaire---a primary target of the Soviet Union's Africa policy, as is shown by its intervention there since the early 1960s. Angola's other two close neighbors, Zambia and Namibia, are also high on the list of Soviet policy priorities in Africa. A breakthrough in Angola could extend Soviet influence into Namibia, and so to the threshold of South Africa. South Africa and the Horn of Africa are, perhaps, the two most important target areas of Soviet "ocean politics."

In late 1973, after China had reestablished diplomatic ties with Zaire and had decided to train FNLA cadres, Soviet policy also showed more concern about the Chinese role in Angola. Sino-Soviet rivalry was undoubtedly a major element in Moscow's decisionmaking on Angola---perhaps even the most important element in it. 69/ This is supported by a typical Soviet geopolitical view of China's role in Africa expressed by one of its senior China watchers:

The Chinese are determined to expand their influence throughout Africa. Their target area is southern Africa. They have established a strong hold in Tanzania on the Indian Ocean, and are closely involved with FRELIMO in the struggle in Mozambique. The railway line they are helping to build from Dar es Salaam to the copperbelt in Zambia is an aspect of their policy. Their clear aim is to help extend the railway from Zambia into the copper area (Shaba) of Zaire. Thus they will have succeeded in establishing a major strategic railway right across the narrow waistline of Africa, linking the Indian and Atlantic oceans. 70/



This background makes it easy to understand the vigorous reaction of the Soviet bureaucracy to the restoration by the Chinese of diplomatic links with Zaire and their decision to help the FNLA in 1973. It may also help explain their policy of increasing their military intervention in support of the MPLA early in 1975. The military situation in Luanda and northern Angola at that time strongly favored the combined Zaire and FNLA forces (that is, the forces backed by the Chinese as well as by the Americans). The Russians repeatedly alleged that China's role in Angola proved that it had again "done a deal with the most reactionary international elements." 71/ Hence, if the FNLA and UNITA (the latter was regarded by the Russians as Maoist) were to succeed in defeating the MPLA, the result from the Soviet position, would be a victory for the Chinese, as well as for the Americans. The Soviet Union sees the Chinese as an even greater threat to its interests in the third world than the Americans.

Soviet policy in Angola after the collapse of the Caetano regime continued to be linked with its policy in Portugal, where it was closely engaged in 1974 and early 1975 with the bid for power by Alvaro Cunhal's Communist party and its allies. The Portuguese Communists had endorsed the Alvor Accord of January 1975. So had the Russians, who appear to have held that position until possibly March 1975, when the MPLA, under heavy pressure in Luanda, sent its urgent requests to the Soviet Union and Cuba for military aid.

For the Russians to have given such aid openly at that time would have been seen by the OAU as hostile to its demand that no foreign

support be given to any one of the three rival Angolan movements. It would therefore have suited the purpose of the USSR (especially that part of its bureaucracy most directly concerned with maintaining good relations with Africa) for the Cubans to act as the channel of military support for the MPLA. (Cuba had never made a secret of its lack of regard for the OAU.)

Thus the initial Soviet reaction to developments in Angola was to adopt a low-risk policy after March 1975, when it began secretly to fly arms into Brazzaville for shipment to the MPLA. That decision may also have been influenced by evidence of covert American support. This factor was, in any case, decidedly less important than the open support of the FNLA by China and Zaire--two of Moscow's betes noires. Nor can there be much doubt about the close coordination between Cuba and the Soviet Union in establishing a bridgehead for military supplies to the MPLA at Brazzaville, since Cubans are known to have handled the shipments of Soviet arms arriving there. 72/

It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of the air and sea facilities available at Brazzaville to the success of the Soviet-Cuban operation in making the MPLA's victory possible. Before July 1975 two difficulties stood in the way of the Russians and the Cubans getting substantial military supplies directly into Angola, especially into Luanda, where they were most urgently needed. First, the Portuguese authorities in Luanda were still fairly successful in intercepting arms shipments. Second, the OAU was being extremely vigilant about transgressions of its policy on foreign intervention.

The People's Republic of the Congo was one of the few OAU members that did not go along with the consensus--partly because of its rivalry with Mobutu's policies arising from its interest in the future of Cabinda if that enclave (which abuts on the Congo's territory as well as Zaire's) were to secede from Angola.

Another important advantage of Brazzaville to the Soviet Union was that it made any visible military presence in Angola unnecessary; this could be left to the Cubans. Neto confirmed in a statement in January 1976 that, while substantial military supplies had been received from the USSR, none of its military advisers had come to Angola. He added: "Such advisers were only in Congo-Brazzaville, and from there they have tried to help MPLA." 73/ The Soviet link with the MPLA in Luanda was Igor Ivanovich Uvarov, a Tass correspondent, who is also believed to be a leading member of Soviet military intelligence, GRU. 74/

The Russians moved into a third, high-risk phase in mid-July 1975, at about the same time that President Ford endorsed the Forty Committee's proposal to provide covert military aid for the FNLA-UNITA. At that time, there was also some evidence that Chinese arms were being used by the Zairean armed forces who were intervening in the fighting with the FNLA. The Soviet media gave prominence to a report by Leslie Gelb in the New York Times on September 25, 1975, suggesting that the United States and China were coordinating their covert military support for the anti-MPLA forces.

However, of greater concern to the Soviet Union in early August 1975 was the growing MPLA conviction that the South African army was about to play a major military role in Angola. This fear had been aroused by

relatively small South African incursions into southern Angola to "protect" the hydroelectric project in the Cunene valley. These fears were soon justified by South Africa's open military intervention in late October. The MPLA had foreseen this new danger and had obviously succeeded in convincing the USSR and Cuba about the gravity of any major intervention by the South African army.

All the evidence leads to the conclusion that the decisions to greatly increase Soviet aid and to commit large numbers of Cuban combat troops had been made by August, primarily to check this new "imperialist" threat, which the MPLA, the Soviet Union, and Cuba naturally saw as collusion between the United States, South Africa and China--a view put forward by, among others, V. G. Solodovnikov, director of the USSR Institute of African Studies. 75/

It is hard to believe that, if the Russians and the Cubans had not made their final decision to intervene massively in late July or early August, the South African military intervention would not have succeeded in tipping the military balance against the MPLA. What is open to argument is whether the South Africans would have undertaken this commitment if they had been aware of the earlier substantial buildup of Cuban combat troops.

The Soviet-Cuban military buildup did not, however, end when the MPLA formed the government of independence in November 1975. This is understandable for a number of reasons. While the MPLA had won a substantial political victory, it was by no means militarily secure. A rival government had been established by the FNLA and UNITA, whose forces controlled well over half the country, and the South African armed military

forces had not yet been withdrawn from Angola but stood ready to help consolidate the forces of the FNLA and UNITA in their traditional areas.

Thus, to ensure a total MPLA victory in Angola, the Russians and the Cubans probably perceived little choice other than to increase their level of military intervention. This they did after November 1975, when the numbers of Cuban troops rose from between 12,000 and 15,000 to about 19,000.

The only two constraints on Soviet decisionmaking were Cuba's own view of its commitments and the possible damage to the cause of detente. The Kremlin discounted the possibility of serious U.S. intervention in Angola.

Statements by the USSR throughout 1974-75 were designed to show that its policy was in full accord with UN decisions on support for anti-colonial liberation movements; that it had adopted a principled stand in opposing "imperialist conspiracies" (a concerted U.S.-China conspiracy); that it supported the legitimate and most popular Angolan party; and that it served no selfish interests. Even before South Africa's military intervention, the USSR's statements suggested that it was engaged in fighting "South African racism" but denied that there was a civil war in Angola and that the Soviet role was in any sense "interventionist," since the USSR was acting in response to, and in defense of, the "legitimate authority." A notable feature of these statements was the emphasis they put (especially in propaganda to third world countries) on the dangers of the Chinese wish for "world hegemony."

South Africa's open intervention in late October 1975 greatly strengthened the Soviet case. Moscow could then claim with even greater justification what it had been saying for months: that it and Cuba were preventing aggression by the South African "racist" regime in Pretoria. From then on, the Russians had much less difficulty in countering African objections to their role in Angola. After Angola's independence, their position was that they were supporting, as they claimed they were fully entitled to do, a sovereign African government.

The Russians consistently and firmly rejected the idea that their role in Angola could damage detente. This is exemplified by the views of Georgi Arbatov, a senior Soviet adviser on U.S. affairs to Brezhnev: "If Dr. Kissinger saw Angola as a major issue of East-West relations, even some sort of confrontation, I think he was absolutely wrong. It was a counter-productive way to deal in general with the African situation." 76/

There is little evidence that the Soviet Union at any time seriously expected the United States to intervene openly or actively in Angola, although clearly it knew that the United States was covertly supporting the anti-UNITA forces. Moscow appears to have distinguished between U.S. policies in support of the anti-Communist forces in Portugal and what was likely to happen in Angola. Its assessment of U.S. public and congressional opinion in the aftermath of Vietnam was justified in October 1975, when Congress opposed the State Department's proposal to renew military aid to Zaire, and especially in December, when the Turney amendment forbidding all clandestine aid to Angola and Zaire was adopted by the Senate.

The clear conclusion is that the Soviet Union did not anticipate any serious American military intervention in Angola that could have brought the two superpowers into a military confrontation harmful to detente. Equally clearly, the strong congressional and public constraints on the U.S. administration's ability to intervene on any significant scale in Angola removed any possible Soviet hesitation about expanding its military intervention. After November 1975 Moscow also felt itself completely free to act because of the "legitimization" of its support for the new "sovereign" MPLA government in Luanda and because of the intervention by the South African army.

Soviet public statements show little concern about the damage to U.S.-Cuban relations after Castro had pointedly rejected Washington's demands that he withdraw his troops from Angola as a precondition to the resumption of normal diplomatic relations. Moscow may in fact have welcomed the postponement of normal relations between Washington and Havana, since this could open the way for Castro to end his complete dependence on the USSR.

#### Perceptions of Soviet Policy and Actions

Soviet policies polarized Africa's political leaders. In Angola two camps grew up--one strongly pro-Soviet, the other bitterly anti-Soviet. The MPLA behaved as a Soviet and Cuban ally throughout; its leaders invited Soviet and Cuban intervention and defended it against all critics. After independence, however, Neto showed his readiness to move into a less aligned position by seeking Western economic cooperation (see below).

Savimbi and other UNITA leaders were initially not anti-Soviet;

they remained willing, until July 1975, to enter into a coalition government with the MPLA. They finally turned for help to the major anti-Communist country in the region, South Africa, when they failed to find effective allies either in Africa or in the West. Holden Roberto, on the other hand, was always hostile to the Russians and remained their implacable foe, along with his close ally, President Mobutu.

Mobutu's deep fears about "the spread of Russian influence" were further strengthened by Soviet behavior in Angola. He reacted by making desperate efforts to persuade the Western powers to intervene in Angola and to encourage the emergence of an anti-Soviet front of African states. He succeeded in winning support for this idea from about a dozen African leaders--including those of Egypt, Sudan, Ivory Coast, Senegal, and Morocco. But although Mobutu maintained his close alliance with Idi Amin, the Ugandan leader's animosity to ward the Soviet role in Angola was short-lived. He felt deeply humiliated by what he regarded as the Soviet Union's bullying to get him to do its bidding; but while he resisted it on this point, his reliance on Soviet military supplies was obviously a major factor in causing him to restore his diplomatic relations with Moscow.

Zambia's President Kenneth Kaunda reacted particularly strongly against the Soviet and Cuban actions in Angola, which he repeatedly denounced as a danger to the continent. While not publicly supporting U.S. military intervention, he expressed his understanding of the reasons for which the FNLA and UNITA leaders decided to seek American military aid.

South Africa's reaction to events in Angola was predictable since



its regime has always felt threatened by any spread of Communist influence in Africa. What was not so predictable was its decision to commit itself to a military role in Angola.

Overall, African reactions were largely ambivalent. Most African leaders were strongly opposed to intervention by any of the foreign powers, but they tended to blame both superpowers for engaging in "big power politics." After South Africa's military intervention, the Soviet-Cuban role was more generally accepted. However, many African leaders have made a clear distinction between the role of the Russians and that of the Cubans.

Cuba's influence in Africa was undoubtedly increased by its role in Angola, a paradox that may be explained by admiration for a small third world country that took on such a massive commitment and carried it through so successfully. Positive feelings toward Cuba were undoubtedly a major factor in diminishing African hostility toward the Soviet Union.

Western European countries played a singularly low-key role in the Angolan affair, although they strongly criticized the Russians and the Cubans. France promised support for Zaire and possibly also gave covert aid to the FNLA. Sweden, while opposed to the Soviet intervention, supported the MPLA.

The Ford administration took a much graver view of the Soviet-Cuban intervention than did its NATO allies. In response to the escalation of the Soviet-Cuban military intervention in mid-1975, it began to support the idea of playing a more activist part.

American policy on Angola was made largely by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, often against the advice of his own senior advisers in

the State Department 77/ and very much against the grain of the post-Vietnam mood of Congress. Kissinger believed that it was necessary to "stop this first major Soviet adventure in Africa in 15 years." His view of the Soviet Union's action was that it was engaged in for the first time massively introducing military equipment and starting a cycle of upheavals similar to the impact of their first introduction of military equipment into the Middle East, into Egypt, in 1954, which led to over 20 years of constantly growing tension. At this point, we sought to stop this by assisting the Black forces that were resisting the takeover. When we did this, the Soviets escalated yet another level by introducing Cubans. However, he was to later state: There was no intention of sending American troops to Angola under any circumstances; there was no possibility of anybody introducing 500,000 troops into Angola. In fact, it was the Russians through the Cubans who were in our position, that is to say, in the position we were in in Vietnam. We were backing the local population against foreign invaders, or at least against foreigners. 78/

Kissinger continued to believe that "it was relatively easy to stop the Cubans and Soviets in Angola." 79/ He attributed what he saw as the U.S. failure to react effectively to Soviet intervention in Angola to the fact that the country had "lost the capacity to create incentives for responsible behavior [by the Soviet Union], and the capacity to create penalties for irresponsible behavior--both the result of the decline of executive authority. I think this was the reason why the Soviets made their attempts in Angola in 1975." 80/

American concern about the Soviet intervention and the risk of sour-

ing detente was communicated in private discussions with top Soviet leaders (including Brezhnev and Kosygin), through direct diplomatic exchanges, and by repeated public warnings from the President and the secretary of state. As late as November 24, 1975, Kissinger was still publicly warning Moscow that the United States could not "remain indifferent" to Soviet intervention. 81/ However, the Russians had already decided that there was little risk of American action to back up that kind of threat. The behavior of Congress had clearly shown them the limitations on the administration's options.

#### Outcomes

The Russians achieved their immediate objectives in Angola, but their longer-term goals have not been secured and remain in some doubt. With the Cubans' indispensable assistance, they were able to help their local ally, the MPLA, establish itself as Angola's legal government against its Western-supported opponents, the FNLA and UNITA. Soviet and Cuban military support made it possible for the MPLA to fight back from what had appeared to be a losing position in March 1975 to achieve a commanding position only nine months later. Moreover, the close relations that had grown up between Neto and his Communist allies in those critical nine months played a crucial part in his decision to reverse his earlier disavowal of the MPLA as a Marxist-Leninist organization 82/ and to establish the new Angola as a Marxist state. This fulfilled one of Moscow's longer term politico-strategic objectives. There is no evidence to suggest that Neto's decision was made because of Soviet pressure, but there is every reason to suppose that he was strongly encouraged to move in that direction, especially by the Cubans.

Nevertheless, Soviet military intervention was not completely effective. The addition of Soviet arms and Cuban troops, although essential to the MPLA's gaining political power, were yet not powerful enough to crush the MPLA's opponents who continued to threaten the MPLA regime.

The FNLA and, especially, UNITA remained in control of a sizable part of the country. They could expect immediate support from neighboring Zaire and South Africa, as well as from further afield, and they continued to present a military challenge to the MPLA and the Cuban ground troops. Thus at the time of independence there was an insecurely based regime, heavily dependent for its survival on Soviet and Cuban military aid, and faced with serious internal and external enemies.

Nevertheless, the immediate outcome of the conflict favored the Soviet Union in a number of ways.

First, the defeat of South Africa's military intervention was symbolically important. Although most of the serious fighting was done by the Cubans--who won praise in Africa for "driving out" the South Africans--it was understood that they could not have been successful without Soviet military backup. This praise was expressed by African leaders not previously well disposed toward the USSR--for example, Joshua Nkomo, the leader of the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), and Sam Nujoma, the Namibian leader of SWAPO--as well as by some who had been actively hostile--notably, President Kaunda of Zambia. The effective commitment of Soviet military power attracted many Africans' interest in the potential value of the USSR as an effective ally in their fight against the minority white regimes in southern Africa.

Second, the active military presence of the Russians and the Cubans in southern Africa enabled them to intervene more directly in the conflicts on the continent. Their close ties with the MPLA regime (fortified by the signing of a Treaty of Friendship and Support on October 8, 1976) assured them of at least a chance of acquiring access to naval, air, and other facilities. They used their military units in Angola to begin large training programs for SWAPO, the Zimbabwe Independence People's Republican Army of Joshua Nkomo, and the African National Congress of South Africa.

Third, the Russians were able to extend their military reach into the south central Atlantic region. The Soviet navy's West Africa Patrol was no longer exclusively dependent on facilities at Conakry (always risky because of the unpredictability of Guinea's President Sekou Toure); it could expect to extend its operations as far south as Luanda and Lobito. The Soviet fishing fleet could also hope to get important facilities in the area and Soviet air links (Aeroflot and military) were extended several thousand miles down the West African Atlantic coast. In these ways the USSR's military potential was strengthened.

Fourth, the reversal of the OAU's stand on recognizing only the MPLA and on military intervention in Angola meant that no permanent damage was done to Soviet relations with most African states. For this the Russians could thank South Africa's decision to intervene militarily, as well, of course, as the success of its intervention.

Fifth, the outcome was damaging to two of Angola's neighbors, Zaire and South Africa, both of which were Soviet target areas. Moscow has sought the overthrow of Mobutu since 1963. South Africa saw its

security position made more perilous (especially in Namibia) by the defeat of the anti-Communist front, which its army had unsuccessfully supported.

Sixth, the defeat of China's allies in the conflict (Zaire and the FNLA) was especially satisfactory to the Russians, who saw this as a serious setback to Peking's third world role in Africa. China's failure to produce effective military support for its allies strengthened the belief of some leaders in southern Africa that, so far as military support went, the USSR was likely to be a more effective strategic ally. Furthermore, the Chinese had very limited success in Africa with their high-pitched propaganda campaign aimed at exposing the Soviet Union as being engaged in "imperialist expansion."

Finally, the defeat of the pro-Western forces and the loss of political, economic, and military influence in an area that they had dominated for centuries represented a decided setback for the United States and the Western European powers. This reduction of Western influence in a part of the world hitherto dominated by a NATO power satisfied another Soviet objective. The ambiguities and, in the end, the ineffectiveness of the American response in Angola damaged U.S. interests without achieving any worthwhile results.

Some of the other outcomes were not so satisfactory for the Soviet Union. While, as has already been noted, a majority of African states and leaders ended by approving the Soviet-Cuban military intervention, this was to some extent offset by increased hostility toward the USSR on the part of a number of African leaders because of what they felt to be clear evidence of "Soviet expansionism." A more active anti-Communist

front began to develop in Africa, supported by such countries as Egypt, Morocco, Sudan, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Somalia, and Zaire.

American-Soviet relations were also damaged by the events in Angola, particularly because of American concern about the large deployment of Cuban combatants. The Angolan episode placed new strains on the process of detente and contributed to the tension produced by Soviet-Cuban intervention in the Horn of Africa soon afterward.

The Russians, having tested the responses of the United States to the phased increase of their military intervention in Angola, were apparently encouraged to believe that the mood of the U.S. Congress and the American people, reflecting the Vietnam experience, had considerably reduced the chances of the administration's being allowed to mount an effective military response to Soviet intervention in situations such as that in Angola. This evaluation of future American policy in the third world undoubtedly influenced the USSR's decisions in the Horn of Africa.

The U.S. position on Angola lacked credibility to Africans. The African leaders and forces that had looked to the United States for support felt betrayed. While this was especially true of the anti-MPLA forces in Angola and Zaire, it was also the case for Zambia and a number of other African states, including Ethiopia. South Africa particularly felt aggrieved at U.S. policy; its leaders publicly complained of having been let down. On the other hand, African leaders opposed to intervention by any of the major powers (notably, Nigeria) criticized U.S. policy for having contributed to the Soviet-Cuban intervention because of the covert (though well publicized) CIA operations. The open

debate in the United States made it certain that the administration could not engage in effective clandestine operations. Angola was seen by both the Russians and the Africans as a watershed in American attitudes about U.S. military intervention in third world conflicts.

While Angola represented a breakthrough for USSR political and military strategy, important questions remain undecided about the long-term possibilities of consolidating these initial gains. More than three years after Angola's independence, the MPLA was still not successful in consolidating its power or in rescuing the country's economy from the dangerous state into which it had fallen when the Portuguese withdrew. Several major events since Angola's independence must be considered in evaluating the Soviet Union's chances of exploiting its initial advantage.

First, internal power struggles in the MPLA surfaced in 1977 when a powerful army and political faction, led by Alvo Nites, came close to overthrowing Neto's faction, which was saved largely by Cuban military intervention. Although this attempted coup was not, as was reported at the time, favored by the USSR, there is no reliable evidence to show what the attitude of the Nitists would have been toward the Russians and the Cubans if the coup had succeeded. A major grievance of the Nitists was the preponderance--as they saw it--of "whites" in the MPLA regime, that is, mesticos (Afro-Portuguese) and Portuguese Communists. It is not known whether the Nitists included the Soviet bloc and Cuban advisers in their grievances about "white domination." Many Angolans make a clear distinction between the "whiteness" of Russians, East Germans, and so on, and the "nonwhiteness" of Cubans--a distinction,



incidentally, that is encouraged by the Cubans. However, after the Cuban role in crushing the Nitist coup, there is no reason to suppose that the surviving Nitists in the MPLA feel much affection for either the Cubans or the Russians.

Second, the continuing failure of the MPLA to overcome its internal tension was shown by the dismissal of Prime Minister Lopo do Nascimento and a number of other important ministers in 1978.

Third, in 1978 the Neto regime's policies toward Zaire and Namibia unexpectedly changed in a way potentially harmful to long-term Soviet objectives. As a result of OAU mediation (and with American encouragement), Neto and Mobutu agreed to end hostilities. If this reconciliation holds up (and it is in the interest of both local parties that it should), it could contribute importantly to stabilizing both the MPLA and the Mobutu regimes. This would reduce the opportunities for the USSR to use Angolan territory to work against Mobutu. The official Soviet line has been to welcome this reconciliation.

Fourth, Neto unexpectedly took a leading part (as a member of the African Front-line states) in supporting the efforts of the five Western members of the UN Security Council to find a peaceful settlement for Namibia. He was largely instrumental in influencing SWAPO's leader, Sam Nujoma, to drop his opposition to the Western proposals. The end of the guerrilla war against Namibia and Namibia's emergence as an independent state would remove the risk of an escalated conflict against the South African army by SWAPO forces using Angola as a base. An independent black state would act as a buffer between Angola and South Africa, cutting off South

African and other support for UNITA, facilitating the task of pacifying southern Angola, and reducing the need for Cuban troops in the country.

The major short-term advantage of a peaceful settlement in Namibia would be the breathing space it would give the MPLA to consolidate its position--an obvious Soviet interest. Another possible advantage would be SWAPO's coming to power in Namibia; the USSR could then hope to develop good relations with such a regime. The disadvantage would be the loss of opportunities offered by an armed struggle to exploit the atmosphere of violence in the region to undermine the South African regime--a strategic Soviet interest. The Russians remained quiet about Neto's decision to cooperate in the Western initiative, but they continued to attack the Western moves as "imperialist maneuvers designed to help the South African racist regime."

Fifth, the MPLA regime has continued to show a keen interest in improving its relations with the West, mainly for economic reasons. Serious economic difficulties have produced strong popular feelings against the regime, further contributing to its instability. Economic recovery has been painfully slow. Since Angola's natural markets lie in the Western economy, it obviously needs to improve relations with Western Europe and North America. The MPLA has acknowledged this reality and has adopted policies to reflect it.

However, relations with the United States have been impeded by Washington's insistence that diplomatic relations could be resumed only after Cuban troops had left Angola. This demand was contemptuously rejected by Neto, who has nevertheless received U.S. ambassadors in his

capital and continued to express an interest in establishing normal ties with Washington.

Although the Angolan authorities took a 51 percent interest in Gulf Oil's operations in Cabinda, they have publicly expressed a desire that this U.S. multinational continue to exploit their oil. They have disavowed any intention of nationalizing the oil industry.

In some ways, therefore, Angola's Marxist regime has shown evidence of wishing to adopt pragmatic policies in pursuing its economic and foreign policy interests.

Finally, on the other hand, Angola's military links with the Soviet bloc and Cuba have been greatly strengthened since independence. In early 1979 there were more Cuban soldiers (possibly 19,000) in the country than at independence because of the threats to Angola's northern and southern borders and the continuing challenge from the MPLA's internal opposition. Angola relies for all its military supplies on Warsaw Pact countries and for much of its military training on Cuba. And East Germany has helped build up Angola's air force and a paratroop division.

#### The Horn of Africa

The five political entities that make up the Horn of Africa are Ethiopia; its dissident province, Eritrea; the Somali Republic (Somalia); the Djibouti Republic; and the Republic of Sudan.

#### The Principals and Their Allies

The Amhara-dominated Christian Kingdom of Ethiopia had for centuries been the dominant power in the region, except for a brief inter-

regum (1936-39) of Italian occupation. During World War II Haile Selassie's imperial regime became a Western ally; after the war it was almost entirely dependent on the United States for its arms. It also developed close links with Israel and maintained a suspicious hostility toward its Arab neighbors. Its closest African ally was Kenya. Ethiopia's relations with the West changed after Haile Selassie's dethronement in September 1974, when the successor military regime, the Provisional Military Administrative Committee (PMAC)--also known as the Dergue (an Amharic word for committee)--embarked on a Marxist-Leninist revolution. It ended its military ties with the United States and entered into a close alliance with the Soviet bloc and Cuba while still retaining its alliance with Kenya and, until February 1977, with Israel. Like the Haile Selassie regime, its relations with most of the Arab world (except Libya, South Yemen, and the Palestinian organizations) and Somalia were hostile. By 1978 the Dergue had also quarreled with China. 83/

At its independence in 1960, the Somali Republic flew a flag with a five-pointed star, each point representing a territory in the Horn inhabited mainly by Somalis to which the new republic laid claim. Two of the points--British Somaliland and Italian Somalia--had joined to form the new republic, leaving three points to be collected: the Ogaden province of Ethiopia, Djibouti, and the northeast province of Kenya. Although Somalia joined the Arab League, its closest political and military ally was the USSR from 1967 until the USSR began to replace the United States as Ethiopia's main source of arms in 1976. After finally severing its military ties with Moscow (as well as with Havana) in

1977, Somalia was forced to rely almost entirely on its fellow-members in the Arab League--especially Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Sudan--and on Iran. It also sought to win allies in the West, and it drew closer to China. Somalia has been an unwavering champion of Eritrean independence.

The tiny Djibouti Republic achieved its independence from France in 1976, but it retained a military link through an alliance that provided for the continued presence of 2,150 French troops. Its 220,000 inhabitants are divided between Afars, who have close ethnic links with clans in Ethiopia, and Issas, who are directly related to Somali clans. Djibouti has sought to maintain a careful neutrality between its two rival neighbors.

The Sudan has traditionally controlled the back door into the Horn, but is also a Red Sea state. After severing its military ties with the USSR in 1972, it developed close ties with the Arab League, particularly with Egypt with which it has a military defense alliance. Its relations with Libya have been troubled since the mid-1970s. Although Sudan attempted to maintain a neutral position in the conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia, its relations with the former have been uneasy for years because of its support for the Eritreans. With the rise of the Dergue, Sudan sought more military aid from Western countries, especially from the United States and Britain. It also relies on China for military supplies.

Eritrea is still formally a province of Ethiopia, but it has played an increasingly independent and disruptive role since 1962, when it launched an armed liberation struggle for at least a measure of independence from Ethiopia. Because the opposition originated in the Muslim

parts of Eritrea, it attracted sympathy and support from other Muslim countries, especially in the Arab world. Another reason for this Eritrean-Arab alliance was their shared interest in opposing Haile Selassie's pro-Israel stand. The Soviet bloc and Cuba gave some support to two of the three fronts making up the Eritrean liberation movement--the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) and the Eritrean Popular Liberation Front (EPLF). The third faction is the Eritrean Liberation Front-Popular Liberation Forces (ELF-PLF), which was the first to use the Muslim issue to appeal to the Arab world. Despite the Marxist tendencies of the leadership in the EPLF and the ELF, all three fronts are essentially nationalistic. Soviet and Cuban support for the Dergue produced serious tension with the Eritrean leaders. The Eritreans receive no support from the West or from black Africa. The EPLF is much the strongest of the three fronts. The ELF largely ceased to count as a military factor after mid-1978. The ELF-PLF has increasingly oriented itself toward Saudi Arabia but is itself internally divided.

#### Regional Forces

The pattern of regional alliances has been shaped by four factors: the Horn's strategic location at the nexus between black Africa and the Arab world and at the crossroads of a network of international sea routes; inter-Arab rivalries; the Arab-Israel conflict; and the rival interests of the major world powers.

President Nasser of Egypt was the first to propose turning the Red Sea into an "Arab Sea"--an idea that has survived his time. Nasser's rationale for controlling the Red Sea was that it was essential to tightening the stranglehold on Israel. Saudi Arabia, which was suspicious of Nasser's designs, became attracted to the idea of creating an "Arab

Sea" after the buildup of a Soviet naval presence in the Red Sea, particularly after the Russians had acquired naval facilities in Somali ports. This Saudi defense interest was shared by the Shah's Iran. Israel and Ethiopia both saw the Arab design for the Red Sea as a threat, which was a major reason for their close military cooperation in the region.

The Arab world saw the secession of Eritrea, under Muslim leadership, as a major step toward asserting effective control over the Red Sea and at the same time weakening the historic power of Ethiopia's "Christian Kingdom" in the region.

Libya was drawn into the region's politics because of Colonel Qaddafi's enmity toward the Egyptian and Sudanese regimes; but though it took the side of the Dergue against Somalia, it continued to give its political support to the Eritreans.

The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDY, or South Yemen) took the side of "revolutionary Ethiopia" largely because of its close military and political ties with the USSR and Cuba; but it, too, continued to support the Eritreans.

Kenya, while sharing the suspicions of other regional powers about the nature of Soviet expansion in the area, nevertheless continued to give its strong backing to Ethiopia because of its overriding concern about the Pan-Somali threat to its territorial integrity.

These manifold and often contradictory interests produced two strangely assorted alliance systems in the developing conflicts in the Horn. Ranged alongside Ethiopia were Kenya, Libya, South Yemen, Israel,

and the Palestinian organizations, as well as the Soviet bloc, Cuba, and Yugoslavia. Support for Somalia and Eritrea came from Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria, Iran, Sudan, and Egypt.

#### Global Factors

Aside from Ethiopia, the Red Sea area had traditionally been dominated by Britain, France, and Italy, mainly as competitors concerned with expanding or defending their colonial spheres of influence. Italy faded out after its defeat in World War II. Britain largely withdrew when it began in the 1960s to wind down as a military power east of Suez. Only France has maintained a residual military role in Djibouti as part of its defense network in the Indian Ocean.

The United States became the dominant Western military power in the Red Sea area in the 1950s, mainly through its defense agreements with Haile Selassie's Ethiopia, its alliance with Saudi Arabia, and the expansion of its naval role in the area. The main American interests have been two. In the words of a senior State Department official, Edward Mulcahy, the United States "needed a strong friend [Haile Selassie] who could be trusted." <sup>84/</sup> Its other interest was in its communications relay center at Kagnaw on the high plateau near Asmara in Eritrea—then still vital to its naval communications. U.S. economic and military aid to Ethiopia between 1949 and 1974 was in a sense "rent" for Kagnaw. In 1973, after it became possible to "float" the communications center in navy ships, Kagnaw lost its value, and the Nixon administration decided to make a substantial reduction in its military commitments to Ethiopia. The U.S. arms agreement was ended in April 1977. The Israelis, however, continued to give some military support to Ethiopia until a year later,



when an incautious public boast by Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan resulted in Colonel Mengistu's ending Ethiopia's relations with Israel.

After Somalia finally broke its military ties with the USSR in November 1977, the United States and other NATO members were under considerable pressure from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Sudan to help the Somalis make up for the loss of Soviet arms. None of the Western powers yielded to the pressure because they did not wish to become militarily involved in the local conflicts. By then, too, it was clear that Somalia had become an aggressor by sending regular army units across Ethiopia's borders. The Western position was that the conflict should be mediated through the Organization of African Unity and that the security of the area should be left to the regional powers. The United States also refused to allow Saudi Arabia and Iran to pass American-procured military supplies to a third party. This attitude could not be expected to convince the USSR that the NATO powers were not militarily involved; it argued that Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Egypt were simply acting as Western surrogates in buying arms for the Somalis. The United States was also constrained from helping to arm the Somalis by Kenya, a staunch pro-Western country, which feared that sooner or later the Somalis would repeat their Ogaden venture in its northeastern province.

In fact, neither the United States nor any other Western power played a significant military part in the conflicts in the Horn after the American cut-off of military aid to Ethiopia in 1977—much to the distress of its regional allies. Although Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iran, and Sudan wished to see the Western powers arm the Somalis, the Israelis and the Kenyans argued that continuing to support Ethiopia militarily would

keep the Dergue from becoming completely dependent on the Soviet Union.

China attempted to play a neutral role, refusing to supply either side with arms and maintaining its development projects in both Ethiopia and Somalia. However, after the Somalis' March 1978 defeat in the Ogaden and after Ethiopian denunciations of Peking in characteristic Moscow language, China expressed a readiness to provide spare parts for Somalia's Russian-supplied tanks and aircraft.

The Russian interest in the Red Sea is of long standing. Alexis and Peter the Great in the seventeenth century, and Paul I and Catherine the Great in the mid-eighteenth century, all pursued the idea of establishing "blue sea ports" in the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. 85/ However, not until the mid-1950s was this idea translated into practice, when Khrushchev accepted the strategy of Admiral Sergei Gorshkov that the USSR create "a modern navy capable of dealing with the latest innovations in the enemy camp. . .in any part of the globe." 86/ The clearest public statement of the Soviet interest in the region was made by V. Sofinskiy, head of the Soviet Foreign Ministry Press Department, in a televised speech in Moscow on February 3, 1978: "The Horn of Africa is first and foremost of military, political and economic significance. The importance of the area lies in its location at the link-up of the two continents of Asia and Africa. There are a lot of good sea ports in the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean. Moreover, there are searoutes which link oil-producing countries with America and Europe." 87/

Although the Somalis had begun to receive a small amount of Soviet military aid in 1963, the Russians had to wait until 1969 to get the right to use naval facilities at Berbera. But the meager naval facilities

that the Somalis could offer and their unreliability as a long-term ally never really satisfied the Russians, who had sustained the hope that in the post-Haile Selassie era they might be able to satisfy their military strategic needs through Ethiopia.

In the meantime, with Haile Selassie on the throne, the Russians took a close interest in the development of the Eritrean liberation movement, to which they gave only cautious public support and minor military and economic aid. Military training was provided by the Cubans. But Moscow actively began to encourage and support the creation of Marxist cells in both the ELF and EPLF in 1968. 88/

The Soviet Union's patient wait for its opportunity in Ethiopia finally came in July 1976, when its military alliance with the Dergue began to take shape. However, the Russians hoped that, with the rise of a Marxist-Leninist state in Ethiopia to complement the Marxist-Leninist state in Somalia, they would be able to establish a foot in both camps. "With peace, everything will become possible," they promised both the Somalis and the Ethiopians. 89/ What Moscow offered both sides was, in fact, a Pax Sovietica in the Horn, with the USSR as the sole supplier of arms to both Somalia and Ethiopia and the guarantor of their redrawn borders within a federal system.

When this plan was angrily rejected by Somalis because it ignored basic Pan-Somali interests, the Russians were faced with a choice between Somalia and Ethiopia. Moscow seems to have had little difficulty choosing the latter, even though the revolutionary process in Ethiopia was, to say the least, hazardous and uncertain. However, once it became clear, at the end of 1977, that Somalia was using its Russian-trained

army and equipment in the Ogaden, the USSR threw its full military weight behind the revolution in Ethiopia.

Weeks after Moscow conferred its official approval on Mengistu's revolutionary program in March 1977, 89/ Fidel Castro hailed the Ethiopian revolution as "Africa's first genuine Marxist revolution." The Cubans had previously maintained cordial relations with the "Somali revolution"; but their only active role in the region was through their military training support for the Eritrean liberation movement and a relatively strong military training program in South Yemen. On March 14, 1977, Castro arrived in Addis Ababa with the express purpose of helping to promote a "progressive alliance" on the Red Sea, which was to include Djibouti, Eritrea, and South Yemen as well as Ethiopia and Somalia. He envisaged it as a bloc capable of opposing the Red Sea alliance between Sudan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. Having won Colonel Mengistu's approval for the plan, he made a secret trip to Aden where he met with the Ethiopian and Somali leaders to urge on them the possibility of two "scientific socialist" regimes merging their revolutions. But Somalia's President Siad Barre reacted angrily to Castro's proposals. With the failure of this enterprise, Cuba followed the Russians in giving its full support to the Ethiopians.

The Cubans did not fully accept all the aspects of either the Dergue's or the Kremlin's policies. The major differences were over tactics to ensure the success of the Ethiopian revolution and over the approach to Eritrea. On the first of these issues, Castro insisted even more strongly than the Russians that Mengistu transform his military regime into a full revolutionary mass movement with a properly constituted

Communist party. More serious, though, was Cuba's refusal to commit its combat troops to the battlefields of Eritrea after the 1978 defeat of the Somalis in the Ogaden. Having strongly supported the Eritrean liberation movement for many years, the Cubans insisted that the problem in Eritrea was political and should not be settled by force. 90/ The absence of Cuba's ground forces was acutely felt in Eritrea where, despite the overwhelming superiority of Soviet-supplied armor and military aircraft, the resistance, though temporarily weakened, was not crushed.

#### The Course of Events

Ethiopia was wrenched out of its 2,000-year-old feudal system and set on a new revolutionary course in March 1975--thirteen months after the beginning of the mutiny in the Ethiopian army and six months after Haile Selassie's dethronement. The committee of military officers, who had fought their way to the top of the leadership in the Dergue through a series of violent purges, abolished the monarchy, proclaimed a "Socialist Ethiopia" as a one-party state (but without creating the one party), abolished the feudal land system, nationalized all land including urban property, nationalized all industries, and curbed the medieval influence of the Orthodox Church. This lurch into revolution came at a time when virtually the whole country was engulfed in violent conflict; administration had collapsed; the Ethiopian army was divided in its political allegiances and stretched beyond its capacity; just about every experienced army officer above the rank of captain had been liquidated or dismissed; military equipment was outdated, especially compared to the Soviet weapons in the hands of the Somalis, who stood as a threat along the Ogaden border.

Opposition to the military rulers was extremely diverse. Regional and nationalist forces in most of the thirteen provinces had rallied behind local leaders. Although their motives were complex and they were also in conflict with each other, all were agreed on demanding a fairer distribution of power in any postimperial constitution. The strongest of these nationalist forces were situated as follows:

In Tigre in the north, where the traditionalists rallied behind Ras Seyyoum Mengesha and the young behind the Marxist-led Tigre People's Liberation Front (TPLF). In the Oromo (Galla) southern provinces of Bale and Sidamo, where the charismatic leader "General" Waagu Guta had long engaged in an armed conflict against the old emperor, with the back-door support of the Somali Republic. In Begemder, on the western border with Sudan, where the local leader, Bitwoded Adane, supported a modern nationalist and anti-Communist movement, the Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU), which was joined by disaffected soldiers from the Ethiopian army. The movement received token military support from Sudan. In the Afar country, running alongside Eritrea, where the nomads on the Danakil plains took up arms under their prestigious sultan, Ali Mirreh. They were linked with the Afars in Djibouti and had financial and other support from Saudi Arabia and Somalia. In Gojjam and Wollega, two areas traditionally resistant to rule by Addis Ababa, where a number of dissident movements arose. In the Hararge province (Ogaden), where the West Somali Liberation Front (WSLF) led an insurrection movement closely supported by Somalia. In Eritrea, where the Dergue faced its most serious military threat. In Addis Ababa and other large towns, where violent opposition came from the political intelligentsia in the trade unions

and teachers' and students' organizations, led by the Marxist Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP).

Faced with these multifarious internal challenges as well as the threat of a military attack by the Somali Republic and Arab support for all its opponents, the Dergue needed strong external allies if its own power was to be maintained and the country was to survive within its old borders. Not only were normal American supplies inadequate for the Dergue's purposes, but they were actually shrinking at the time since Congress had refused to increase the military aid program beyond a limit of \$16 million. It included about a dozen F-5Es and the Maverick and Sidewinder missiles to go with them. Ethiopia was also allowed to purchase a squadron of second-hand F-5A Freedom Fighters from Iran with U.S. approval. During 1976 Washington still saw the limited supply of arms to Ethiopia as serving three purposes: a means of checking a further Soviet arms buildup in Somalia; a discouragement to the Dergue from looking to Moscow for substantial military aid; and support for pro-Western elements in the Dergue who were engaged in resisting the Communists. This aspect of U.S. policy was strongly encouraged by Israel and Kenya but discouraged by Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

As early as September 1974, the Dergue had turned down a tentative proposal from the USSR that it replace the United States as Ethiopia's source of arms supplies because the Dergue felt it could not count on a power that was still showing no sign of withholding its military aid from Ethiopia's principal enemy, Somalia.

Ethiopia's internal security problems continued to mount throughout 1976. These were further complicated by rivalries with the army and the

Dergue--especially by a bitter struggle in the capital between the EPRP and Me'ison (an Amharic acronym for All Ethiopian Socialist Movement). The EPRP had emerged from its clandestine existence under the emperor's rule when the mutiny started but had soon quarreled with the Dergue because of its own Simon-pure Marxist doctrine that there could be no shortcuts to revolutions; it argued strongly for the installation of a parliamentary system of government to facilitate the growth of a class struggle. When the Dergue turned down these ideas, the Marxists split, and Me'ison, led by Fida Tedla, rallied to Colonel Mengistu's side, arguing that a mass revolutionary party could be created in the ranks of the military regime. Me'ison was Moscow-oriented; it was largely instrumental in promoting the idea in the Dergue that the USSR be chosen as Ethiopia's "strategic ally." Throughout most of 1976 the Dergue and its Me'ison allies maintained what they called a "Red Terror" against the RPRP's "White Terror" of selective assassination and "kneecapping." Thousands died in the capital and the main towns, and many thousands of the intelligentsia were imprisoned.

A Soviet delegation visiting Ethiopia in March 1976 praised the Dergue's "correct progressive stand." Thereafter the Soviet media began to praise Ethiopia's national democratic revolution program, which was drafted by Me'ison and formally adopted by the Dergue in April 1976. In May the Dergue published its Nine-Point Peace Plan for Eritrea; it rejected independence for the province and proposed a federal solution instead. Moscow at once endorsed the plan for Eritrea as a policy deserving the support of all progressives. This endorsement marked the beginning of the USSR's rift with Somalia and Eritrea.



The Dergue issued a proclamation on the last day of 1976 restructuring its organization according to Marxist-Leninist principles. Its program, though notional rather than actual, pointed to the course the revolution was to take. Following a series of purges in the Dergue, Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam emerged as the dominant leader on February 3, 1977. The Ethiopian press published pictures of Mengistu receiving the congratulations of the Soviet, Hungarian, and Chinese ambassadors in Addis Ababa. He also received a message of congratulation from Fidel Castro. Nevertheless, Ethiopia's sense of isolation was expressed by Mengistu on February 4, the day after his triumph, when he said in a broadcast: "In our region, Mother Ethiopia does not have any revolutionary friend, except the PDRY. The broad masses of Ethiopia should constantly ponder this fact." He followed this up by announcing that in the future Ethiopia would seek its military aid from the "socialist countries."

A few weeks later, on February 25, the Carter administration announced further reductions of its foreign aid to Ethiopia (as well as to Argentina and Uruguay) because of their consistent violation of human rights. The previously agreed upon military aid grants of \$6 million were stopped, though not the \$10 million in military sales credits.

As a result, Soviet approval of the Dergue's policies became more vocal. On March 9, 1977, Radio Moscow declared that "the present changes in Ethiopia have created the necessary prerequisites for a just settlement of the dispute in Eritrea." Fidel Castro hailed the "Ethiopian revolution" as Africa's "first genuine Marxist revolution." When Mengistu paid his first visit to Moscow in early April, he was toasted as a

"genuine revolutionary leader." In the same month the Dergue expelled all American advisers from Ethiopia; the United States then cut off all military aid to Ethiopia. Soviet-Somali relations began to decline rapidly and visibly after Mengistu went to Moscow for official talks in May.

It soon became clear that a decision to ship Soviet arms had been made even before Mengistu's May visit--possibly in December 1976, when an influential Dergue delegation had first gone to Moscow to negotiate mutual agreements (these were apparently ratified by Mengistu during his May visit). The evidence for this came from French intelligence sources in Djibouti, 91/ which reported that at the beginning of May consignments of outdated Soviet T-34s and more modern T-54s as well as armored cars had arrived at the port and had been transshipped on the Djibouti-Addis Ababa railway line. They had been shipped across the Gulf of Aden from South Yemen, where the Russians and the Cubans have teams of military advisers. Some of the tanks were off-loaded at Dire Dawa, the main railhead in eastern Ethiopia, close to where the fighting had begun in the Ogaden. In subsequent weeks more arms shipments were reported to have arrived by the same route. Also, Western intelligence agencies reported that by July five planeloads of arms shipments a week were arriving at the Addis Ababa airport. Arab intelligence sources reported that the Soviet Union had agreed to supply Ethiopia with \$385 million worth of materiel, as well as 48 MIGs of various types and up to 300 T-54 and T-55 tanks. 92/

However, the arms buildup did not show any significant increase over the next few months. One possible explanation for this is that handling and assembling the equipment after delivery was a problem. The only

international airport--at Addis Ababa--was reported to be overstrained by the shipments that came in during July. In late September, knocked-down MIG-21s were flown by Soviet transport aircraft into Addis Ababa airport, where they were assembled with the help of Soviet and Cuban technicians. According to Western diplomatic sources in Addis Ababa, Eastern European pilots and flight crews were used to make test flights, but there is no supportive evidence to show whether they were also being used on the battlefronts. From September on, armored vehicles, amphibious aircraft, and other equipment were ferried across the Red Sea from Aden Assab on the Eritrean coast. Some supplies also were brought by Soviet and other Eastern European naval vessels to Massawa, where they were easily observed by Israeli vessels, which were at that time still actively helping the Ethiopian side. The supplies sent by the Soviet bloc to these two ports seem to have been used mainly on the Eritrean front.

The first Cuban presence in Ethiopia was reported by the U.S. State Department on May 25, 1977. 93/ A spokesman for the State Department said the apparent intention was that the Cubans help train Ethiopian forces in the use of Soviet military equipment. He added that this could be "a serious development," which might jeopardize U.S. efforts to normalize relations with Cuba.

Reacting to these Soviet and Cuban developments, President Barre said that Somalia would make "a historic decision" if the Soviet Union continued to arm Ethiopia. "We would not," he said, "be able to remain idle in the face of the danger of the Soviet Union's arming of Ethiopia." 94/ He sent Defense Minister Mohammed Ali Samatar to Moscow on May 25--soon after Mengistu's visit--to seek assurance from the Soviet leaders that

they were not planning to arm Ethiopia. In July there were reports that Soviet military personnel were leaving Somalia. 95/

In the end it was Moscow that made the first move to end its alliance with Somalia. The fighting in the Ogaden province had escalated rapidly in May, when between 3,000 and 6,000 troops of the West Somali Liberation Front (WSLF) captured one important town after the other. The Somali Republic was still insisting at the time that none of its own regular soldiers were involved in the fighting. It stated that the fighting was being done entirely by the Ogadeni Somalis, despite evidence of a considerable backup for the WSLF operations by Russian-type tanks and artillery.

Izvestiya on August 16 referred to the fighting in the Ogaden as an "armed invasion of Ethiopian territory" by "regular units of the Somali army." It added: "Even the plausible excuse of implementing the principle of self-determination did not justify such an act." President Barre flew to Moscow at the end of August in a last attempt to avoid a rupture with the Soviet Union, but although he got no satisfaction from his talks with Brezhnev, he took no immediate steps to end his treaty with the Russians. He explained to Arab diplomats in his capital that pushing the Russians out roughly would result only in their intensifying their support of the Ethiopians and, as had happened with Sadat, would encourage them to try to undermine his own regime.

By early September the Somalis were predicting a triumphant end to their campaign in the Ogaden. Plans were made to proclaim the liberation of "West Somalia" and its accession to the "rest of the Somali nation" before the end of that month. But the Somalis began to feel the strain

of their long lines of communication and the weight of the Soviet armor brought in to sustain the rapidly expanded Ethiopian army, which was engaged in defending the last two strategic points in the Ogaden-- Harar and Diredawa. By October the Somali campaign was stalled. With the arrival of more sophisticated Soviet weapons and technicians the initiative began to pass into the hands of the Ethiopians and their supporters. The critical month was October.

On October 15, Ethiopia's foreign minister, Colonel Felleke Girgis, flew to Cuba to report on the Somali "aggression against Ethiopia"-- and no doubt to seek Cuban support urgently. A few days later, President Barre claimed that there were 15,000 Cuban troops fighting in the Ogaden, an allegation strongly denied by the Cuban Foreign Ministry, which insisted that "there is not a single Cuban combat unit there." 96/ Western intelligence sources confirmed that there were no Cuban "combat units" but reported the presence of Cuban military instructors fighting with Ethiopians in Russian tanks and operating heavy artillery. They also reported the presence of Soviet military advisers and of several hundred South Yemenis serving as drivers of military vehicles. The situation changed in November when U.S. reconnaissance satellites produced photographic evidence of a Cuban military presence.

The Soviet ambassador in Addis Ababa, Anatoly Ratanov, announced on October 19 that his country had "officially and formally" ended its arms supplies to Somalia. On November 13 Somalia abrogated the 1974 Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the USSR, ordered all Soviet experts and military technicians out of the country within seven days, and abolished the use of all air, sea, and land facilities in Somalia by

the USSR. Relations with Cuba also were ended.

Somalia followed up its break with the Soviet Union and Cuba by addressing an urgent appeal for help to its fellow members in the Arab League as well as to the West and China.

According to official Somali sources, the United States had hinted at the possibility of military aid once the treaty with Moscow had been broken. The precise evidence for this claim is contradictory. Nevertheless, on July 26--two months after the Somali campaign had begun in the Ogaden--the United States, Britain, and France announced their preparedness, "in principle," to supply defensive weapons to help Somalia protect its "present territory." The fear at that time was that the Ethiopians might invade Somalia. A State Department spokesman said: "We think it desirable that Somalia does not have to depend on the Soviet Union." At the same time, the United States was in touch with its NATO allies, as well as with Egypt, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Pakistan, to arrange a consortium of nations willing to guarantee Somalia's security. However, Washington's position changed almost immediately. In early August a State Department official announced that President Carter had changed his mind because of the "extreme nature" of Somali backing for the insurrection in the Ogaden, adding: "We have decided that providing arms at this time would add fuel to a fire we are more interested in putting out." 97/ This reversal of policy, which was supported by Britain and France, was the result of two factors. First, the extent of the Somali army's actual involvement in the fighting in the Ogaden was not fully established until late July. Second, Kenya's pro-Western government strongly opposed the provision of any arms to Somalia since it feared

for its own Somali-inhabited province.

The Somalis were understandably angry at this volteface, claiming that an unofficial U.S. envoy had carried specific assurances of U.S. aid if Mogadiscio broke with Moscow. 98/ America's friends in the region of much longer standing than the Somalis were no less upset. Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Sudan, and Iran all exerted considerable pressure on the United States and other NATO countries to facilitate the supply of weapons to the Somalis--if only through third parties. The United States refused to grant such permission to Saudi Arabia and Iran. Both President Sadat and President Nimeiry (Sudan) made personal representations to President Carter during their visits to Washington.

Although leading members of the Arab League had sought to persuade the United States to intervene in the Horn to replace the Soviet Union as Somalia's arms supplier, their own military role was fairly minimal. At their meeting in September 1977 the Arab League foreign ministers expressed deep concern about the situation in the Ogaden and urged all foreign powers to stay out; but it withheld support for Somalia's stand. Arms support of any significance did not begin until January 1978, after the Somalis' defeat in the Ogaden.

Fast Israeli naval units operated openly around Massawa and Assab, bringing special equipment for the Ethiopian army and serving the purposes of Israeli intelligence. About a dozen Israeli military instructors had helped in 1975-76 to train a new battalion of Ethiopian paratroopers, the Nebalbal (the Flame), which was especially active in fighting the urban guerrillas of the "White Terror." But the Israeli instructors had left before the end of 1976. Between twenty and thirty

Israeli specialists arrived early in 1977 to assist in antiguerrilla training and counterinsurgency techniques; their presence was always vigorously denied by the Dergue but not by Israel.

The Libyans increased their presence in Addis Ababa during 1976-77 but played no military role. They reportedly pledged a total of \$425 million of aid through bilateral economic and aid agreements, and they helped to guarantee Ethiopia's oil supplies.

The Organization of African Unity also failed to take a stand on the conflicts in the Horn, although it did attempt to play a mediatory role in August 1977, when a special committee was established to help produce a peaceful settlement. But its efforts petered out when Somalia walked out because of the committee's refusal to admit a delegation from the WSLF.

Just before the massive buildup of Soviet and Cuban military aid at the end of November 1977, the military picture looked like this: The eastern front (Ogaden) was stalemated, with the Somalis prevented from consolidating their hold on Harar and pinned down on the perimeter of Dire Dawa by perhaps 120,000 Ethiopian soldiers (most of whom had been hastily recruited), supported by Soviet tanks, artillery, and MIGs, with fewer than a hundred Cubans, several hundred South Yemeni driver-technicians, and a group of Warsaw Pact senior officers. The Cuban unit was under the command of General Arnaldo Ochoa, who had fought in Angola. On the periphery, the Ethiopian forces were pinned down to defensive operations in the main areas of Bale, Sidamo, and Arssi. On the northern front about 40,000 Eritrean liberation forces had further strengthened their position so that the Ethiopian forces were largely



pinned down in the capital, Asmara, the two Red Sea ports of Massawa and Assab, and the second main city, Keren. The vital road from Assab to Asmara was cut. In the adjacent Tigre province, the TPLF was harassing the movement of troops and supplies across the mountain roads reinforcing the Ethiopian army in Eritrea. On the western front, the forces of the Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU) in Begemder and Semien had begun to lose their earlier initiative.

The main point that emerges from this picture of the fighting is that, despite its huge advantage in manpower and despite having substantially more armament than had been provided by the United States, the Ethiopian army was unable to defeat its challengers by force of numbers.

Western intelligence estimated that there were 100 Soviet-bloc military advisers and 400 Cuban military instructors in Ethiopia when the big military buildup began in late November, although some Western and African diplomatic sources in Addis Ababa put the figure at about 1,000 Soviet-bloc and Cuban military personnel and 300 doctors and civilian technicians.

The signal for the start of the Soviet-Cuban airlift and sealift was the launching of a Russian military reconnaissance satellite, Cosmos 624, on November 26, 1977. Over the next few weeks U.S. "spy" satellites, naval scanners, and radar stations in Israel, Turkey, and Iran monitored extensive Russian air and naval movements. In the first stage of the airlift, U.S. intelligence monitored 50 transport flights from Georgievsk, near the Black Sea, and Tashkent. They flew to Aden, where they refueled before continuing to Addis Ababa. Soon afterward, the United States learned

that flight clearances had been requested from a number of countries, including Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iraq. The requests had given various destinations, including Maputo in Mozambique, Aden, and Tripoli. Washington at once protested, charging that the airspace of a number of countries was being used without permission.

Pakistan briefly detained three military transport planes, camouflaged as civilian aircraft, at Karachi after forcing them to land. Iraq officially protested its airspace being used for flights to Ethiopia via Aden. Its president, Saddam Hussein, said that after its protests to Moscow, Iraq got a formal undertaking that Soviet planes would go only to Aden, not to Ethiopia. 99/ He added that because relations with both the USSR and South Yemen were "so good . . . it's not reasonable to expect that we could tell a friend what it could or could not do, once they got to the Yemen. We told the Soviets, however, that if their attitude towards the Eritrean conflict didn't change, we could not allow their transport aircraft to use our facilities."

The usual route taken by aircraft flying supplies to Ethiopia before December was from Black Sea bases, west across Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, then south over the Adriatic and Mediterranean to Tripoli, and from there across Sudan airspace (without permission) to Addis Ababa. 100/ The pattern changed during December 1977 and early January 1978 when, at the height of the airlift operation, 225 Antonov-22s and Ilyushin-76s--about 15 percent of the Soviet military air transport fleet--simultaneously used widely different routes. Some took the regular route over Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to Tripoli; others flew from near the Caspian Sea over

Iran and Iraq to Aden; others took off from Tashkent and flew across Afghanistan and Pakistan; and still others flew along the Persian Gulf from Georgievsk, across Iraq and Aden. For three weeks in early December, Antonovs were leaving Soviet airfields at Georgievsk at intervals of fifteen to twenty minutes.

A sizable sealift of arms was undertaken concurrently with the airlift. Turkish, Egyptian, and U.S. monitoring agencies recorded the passage of between thirty and fifty Russian and Bulgarian warships and freighters through the Bosphorus and the Suez Canal. They off-loaded their supplies at Massawa and Assab, where Israeli and other intelligence sources (including those of Eritrea) reported the arrival of T-54 and T-55 tanks, crated aircraft, 122-millimeter artillery, and undetermined missiles. Amphibious landing craft were used in this operation—mostly, probably, the two 1,000-ton Polnocny-class ships supplied to South Yemen in 1973--the first time the Soviet Union had provided these to any state except Nasser's Egypt, India, and the Warsaw Pact countries. 101/ Two Alligator-class Soviet warships operated continuously off Massawa, and the EPLF claimed that missiles were fired from them at EPLF positions around the port. 102/

The intensified Soviet airlift and sealift ended suddenly in mid-January 1978. In addition to war materiel, the lift brought in a considerable number of Soviet-bloc and Cuban technicians to handle the equipment, as well as other military elements. U.S. intelligence reports estimated in mid-January 1978 that an additional 200 Soviet, Cuban, and East German military personnel had arrived in Ethiopia, bringing the total to 3,000. 103/ However, the Ethiopians insisted that there were

still only 450 Russians and Cubans in the whole country, none in a combat role. 104/ At the height of the airlift Cuba's defense minister, Raul Castro, arrived secretly in Addis Ababa on a mission undoubtedly connected with the buildup of Cuban combat troops. U.S. intelligence agency reports spoke of the arrival of two Cuban battalions, each of 650 men. 105/ Washington reported that Cuban forces were arriving by air from Aden at the rate of 200 a day from late November on. 106/

Reacting to the Soviet-Cuban operations, the Somali government began a frantic round of diplomacy among Arab League and NATO countries as well as China. The U.S. administration was reportedly surprised and shaken by the size of the Soviet operation. 107/ The situation was handled directly by the president and a few top advisers, and an attempt was made to hamper the airlift by stimulating other nations to protest illegal Soviet use of airspace. 108/ The United States warned the Soviet Union about the risk of expanding the Ogaden war across Somalia's international border.

NATO strategists were concerned about the implications of the demonstration of Soviet airlift capacity. "We used to console ourselves with the thought that the Soviets were not very good at this kind of thing," one NATO official commented. "Now they have shown first in the Middle East, then in Angola and now in Ethiopia that they can organize things very effectively when they want to. They are getting better all the time." 109/ The West German defense minister, George Leber, said that Soviet transport capability had become "a new strategic element" in the East-West balance. 110/

In early February 1978 the Somalis claimed that 20,000 Cubans had arrived in Ethiopia; Western intelligence sources gave the much lower figure of 3,000 Cubans and 1,000 Russians. 111/ However, thousands of Cubans were arriving by sea from Aden and were assembled in a military camp at Assab, which was established during February. 112/ By February 24 U.S. intelligence had raised its estimates of Cuban arrivals to the much higher figure of between 10,000 and 11,000. 113/ According to Brzezinski, they were organized into two infantry brigades and one mechanized brigade. 114/ Somalia claimed that military personnel from other Warsaw Pact countries such as East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary were also involved in what it alleged was a plan for an Ethiopian army invasion of Somalia. 115/ Moscow denied that there was any intention of attacking Somalia itself and that any Warsaw Pact soldiers were engaged in the fighting. 116/ Their denial was directed especially to a Somali allegation that Marshal Dmitri Ustinov, the Soviet minister of defense, had arrived in Addis Ababa to oversee military strategy in Ethiopia. 117/ What was more clearly established, though, was that two Soviet generals had arrived in Harar in the Ogaden--General Vasily Ivanovich Petrov, listed in July 1976 as first deputy commander-in-chief of Soviet ground forces, 118/ and General Grigory Barisov, who had previously been in charge of Soviet military aid to Somalia. 119/ Brzezinski claimed that Petrov was in "direct command" of military operations in the Harar region. 120/ Somalia's minister of information, Abdul Kassam Salad Hassan, also claimed, while on a visit to Peking, that an unidentified East German general had been seen in Harar. According to him, the East Germans were in charge of communications, security, and intelligence in

the Ogaden; the Bulgarians were in charge of food supplies; and the Hungarians and Czechoslovaks were involved in other operations. 121/

The NATO powers first began to show serious concern about Soviet military intervention in the Horn during the major airlift and sealift started at the end of November 1977. The U.S. ambassador made official representations to the USSR protesting the arms buildup. 122/ In January 1978 the United States took the initiative in convening a conference in Washington of a number of NATO powers with special interests in the Red Sea area to discuss developments there. Those invited were Britain, France, West Germany, and Italy. Their conclusion was that no solution could be found by "force of arms," and they called for a negotiated settlement of the dispute. 123/

When the major counteroffensive in the Ogaden, with full Soviet and Cuban backing, started in the first week of February, concern grew in the West that the war would spill over into Somalia. Cyrus Vance warned on February 10, 1978, that if Somalia's border were crossed it "would present a new and different situation," and President Carter revealed on February 17 that he had warned Ethiopia that the United States would consider an invasion of Somalia "a very serious breach of peace, endangering even worldwide peace." A fortnight later, on March 2, he accused the Soviet Union of "overarming" the Ethiopians, which produced "a threat to peace in the Horn of Africa." 124/

President Carter moved late in February 1978 to limit the conflict by ensuring that the war did not spread into Somali territory. As a first step he sent a delegation to warn Colonel Mengistu of the danger of Ethiopian troops crossing Somalia's border. Mengistu promised that

this would not happen if two conditions were met: withdrawal of Somali troops from the Ogaden, and no American arms for Somalia. But he ruled out a cease-fire "while Somali troops were still on Ethiopian soil." 126/ At the same time, Carter approached the USSR and the OAU, asking them to cooperate on the basis of three principles governing U.S. policy in the Horn: Somali withdrawal from the Ogaden; removal of Cuban and Soviet troops from Ethiopia; and lessening of the tension between Somalia and Ethiopia by honoring international boundaries in Africa, even though these were sometimes arbitrarily drawn. While Moscow was ready to provide assurance that Ethiopian forces would not attack Somalia, it rejected the U.S. secretary of state's request that Russian and Cuban troops be withdrawn from the conflict, on the ground that they were entitled to assist the Ethiopians to repel aggression. 127/

Armed with Soviet and Ethiopian promises about Somalia's borders, the United States next asked President Barre to disengage from the Ogaden. On March 9 he announced that he was withdrawing Somalia's "regular forces" from the Ogaden. This was the first time it had even been admitted that the Somali army was fighting in the area. Barre's explanation for his decision was that he had received guarantees from the "big powers" that the Ethiopian forces could not cross Somalia's border and that other foreign forces would be withdrawn from the area. However, although the major powers had guaranteed that Somalia's borders would not be crossed if it withdrew its army, no assurances were obtained by the United States in its negotiations with the USSR about the withdrawal of Soviet and Cuban forces from Ethiopia. On the contrary, even before they had completed their immediate objective in the Ogaden, the Russians

had turned their attention to the second major battlefield, Eritrea.

By February 1978, when Ethiopia's allies were beginning to build up their military presence in Eritrea, the EPLF and the ELF had a virtual stranglehold on the territory. Asmara was tightly surrounded; Massawa was cut off on the inland side, making it impossible for traffic to move out of the port; the road between the only other port, Assab, and Asmara had been cut; and Keren had been taken. The railway line from Djibouti to Addis Ababa was no longer usable. As in the Ogaden, despite its huge manpower superiority in Eritrea, the Ethiopian army was no match for the guerrillas. A senior Ethiopian government official at Asmara, Mengesha Gessesa, said when he defected early in 1978: "It is becoming clear that Eritrea will be a free country in a few months." 128/

The Russians built stockpiles of weapons, tanks, and artillery from ships unloaded in Massawa and Assab, and they flew quantities of arms to Asmara's airport, which was still open to traffic. Two MIG-21 squadrons (twenty four planes) and one MIG-23 squadron (twelve planes) were located at Asmara. It is uncertain who was flying them; the EPLF claimed that they were piloted by South Yemenis. Mil-4 and Mil-8 helicopters, armed with antitank missiles and flown by Russian pilots, were used in Eritrea, as well as in the Ogaden. 129/ (In December 1978 the EPLF shot down one of the helicopters, killing its Russian pilot. 130/ The EPLF reported that Russian crews were seen operating BM-21 multiple-rocket launchers at Massawa. 131/ There were 3,000 Cubans in Asmara, but they stayed in the city and the airport. After the first Ogaden campaign was over in mid-March, General Vassily Petrov arrived in Asmara, presumably to direct the strategy as he had done in the Ogaden campaign.



A Russian general (whose identity was never established) took charge of the Ethiopian air force base at Asmara. Eleven Russian officers of lieutenant-colonel rank commanded field units once the new campaign against the Eritreans developed momentum. Lower ranking officers commanded smaller combat units, with between 50 and 250 officers deployed on each main front. 132/

An unsuccessful attempt was made in March to break out of Asmara and Massawa. After the main campaign in the Ogaden ended, about 120,000 Ethiopian forces were deployed against the Eritreans in an offensive that got under way in May. It achieved a number of initial successes, especially against the ELF on the Sudan border; the siege was broken at Massawa, Keren was retaken, and the road reopened from Assab to Asmara. Despite Ethiopian claims of victory, however, the main opposition force, the EPLF, still held out--and was continuing to do so almost a year later--even taking the initiative as late as April 1979. The only significant change was that the EPLF had been forced to return to its earlier phase of guerrilla tactics and was no longer able, or trying, to defend the towns.

The big difference between the campaigns in the Ogaden and Eritrea was that no foreign ground troops were engaged in fighting the Eritreans. The Cubans and the South Yemenis had both announced that their military units would not become involved in fighting the Eritreans, since they had supported them in the past. Nevertheless, the Cubans did not withdraw their troops from Asmara or Assab. Cuba officially declared that the problem of Eritrea was a political one, which should not be solved by military means. 133/ Although the USSR also favored a political settlement of the Eritrean problem, it lent its support to the Ethiopian

military effort to "crush the counter-revolution" in Eritrea while seeking to promote mediation between the two sides. 134/

Although the Russians ended their big airlift operation in mid-January 1978, a regular supply of arms continued to arrive by sea and air throughout the rest of 1978. U.S. intelligence reported that over 61,000 tons of military equipment had been unloaded in the first five months of 1978 from thirty-six freighters and fifty-nine transport planes. 135/ NATO intelligence sources reported that Soviet and East German technicians were engaged in constructing airfields. 136/ The Tigre People's Liberation Front said it could observe Cubans building a new strategic road and airfield in north Tigre. 137/ The number of Cuban combat troops in Ethiopia was estimated at between 16,000 and 17,000. In August 1978 twice as many Soviet warships as usual were being regularly deployed in the Red Sea: one destroyer, two frigates, one LST, and possibly, one LSM.

#### Soviet Behavior

Although apparently firmly allied by its Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the Somali Republic, the USSR showed early signs of having seen the possibilities opening up for it by developments in Ethiopia. Even before the Dergue dethroned Haile Selassie in September 1974 and steered the country in a revolutionary direction in 1975, Soviet diplomats in Addis Ababa told the Dergue that Russian arms were available to them if they chose to end their military ties with the United States.

Soviet policy--with which Cuba was closely aligned except on the Eritrean question--moved through two distinct phases. The first phase

opened in April 1976 when Moscow signaled its readiness to shift its support to the Addis Ababa regime by endorsing its program of "realistic documents," which, it said, were based on "the feasibility of the immediate tasks of the Ethiopian revolution, whose progress puzzles the uninitiated, maddens its enemies and is a source of satisfaction for the true friends of the new Ethiopia." 138/ Moscow's attitude disturbed its Somali ally--especially when, two months later, it endorsed the Dergue's proposals for settling the Eritrean problem along federal lines. However, the Russians were still careful in their handling of the Somalis, possibly because they were not yet completely sure that the Dergue would suspend its arms arrangements with the United States. During this first phase the Russians, with Cuban support, began to sound out the Somalis about a Pax Sovietica in the Horn of Africa. Their argument was that, once the United States had been eliminated from the area as a military factor, it would become possible for them to help mediate border and other agreements between the Somalis, the Ethiopians, and the Eritreans, 139/ since there would be no "imperialists" left in the area to divide Somalia and Ethiopia. The Somalis immediately rejected this idea, arguing that the Dergue, far from being Marxist, was fascist. The Russians nevertheless continued to press their arguments, while keeping up their side of the treaty obligations with the Somalis. The first phase ended in May 1977 after the United States had scaled down its arms supplies to Ethiopia, and Colonel Mengistu signed a multifaceted agreement with the USSR. Although the agreement did not specify military supplies, Soviet arms began to flow into Ethiopia from that time. Also in May Somalia's President Barre quarreled with Fidel

Castro over his attempt at mediation along the lines proposed by the Soviet Union.

May 1977 was important because it was the month in which regulars of the Somali army began to cross into the Ogaden. Since the Soviet military advisers were still in Somalia at the time, it was impossible for them not to have known what was happening, yet relations with Mogadiscio were not broken until six months later, when Moscow gave as its official reason for the break: "Somalia had launched an armed aggression against Ethiopia, choosing as its target the Ogaden province. The Soviet Union had repeatedly emphasized that it had been, and always would be, on the side of independent African states in the event of an attack. The Soviet Union's principled policy was expressed by the fact that despite its Treaty with Somalia, it came to the aid of the victim of aggression and did not support the Somali leaders' territorial expansion." 140/

The second phase of Soviet policy began in mid-1977 when--while still apparently hoping that the Somalis would in the end come round to accepting its Pax Sovietica plan--Moscow showed that, if faced with a choice between Somalia and Ethiopia, it would choose the latter. This was a bold policy in view of the kind of commitments the Soviet Union would have to make--first, to help Mengistu establish his ascendancy within the Dergue; second, to help his regime establish its control over a country engulfed by military insurrections; and finally, to consolidate the nascent Marxist-Leninist revolution.

Why did the Soviet Union decide to exchange its established foothold in Somalia for all the uncertainties of revolutionary Ethiopia? Ethiopia obviously offered far greater advantages to Soviet interests than

Somalia. Not only did it have two ports (Massawa and Assab), which are far superior to Berbera and Mogadiscio; but there was also the reasonable chance that a strong Ethiopia would someday dominate the important port of Djibouti. Another advantage of Ethiopia over Somalia was that it is potentially a rich country, holding a strategically important position in the African continent and in the Red Sea region. The Russians also probably took into account two other factors that militated against their continued alliance with the Somalis. They knew as well as anyone that Pan-Somalism is the dominant aspect of Somalia's foreign policy and that the army that they had helped to build would, at an opportune moment, attempt to wrest the Ogaden province away from Ethiopia. If they remained in Somalia, they would inevitably be a party to the transgression of Ethiopia's border, which would seriously jeopardize their relations with the Organization of African Unity. The Russians' second concern was that they could never be sure when the Somalis would exercise their option of accepting Saudi Arabian support in exchange for expelling the Soviet presence from the Red Sea--an option that the Somalis have toyed with for some time. Seen in this perspective, the Soviet decision to shift its allegiance is not as surprising as it appeared at the time.

The Soviet Union advanced three reasons for its shifting allegiance: because Ethiopia was a victim of Somali aggression, supported by the "imperialists" and their "proxies" in the area--the "reactionary Arab States" of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Sudan; because they were responding to an appeal for military support from a sovereign government, which was entitled to choose its allies; because of their "international duty to assist progressive revolutionary movements." 141/ In the words of one Soviet authority on Africa, Vladimir Kudryavtsev: "The USSR supported

Ethiopia because its people had started to implement their national and democratic Revolution, the struggle to liquidate feudalism and oppose foreign domination of the country." 142/

The Soviet Union chose to emphasize the first two aims rather than the third--that of supporting a revolution in Africa. This enabled it to score a number of political successes: it could align itself with the OAU principle of resisting forcible changes of borders; it could claim to be acting in conformity with the international right to assist a sovereign state faced with foreign aggression; and it could escape some of the responsibility for its contribution to making the "Somali aggression" possible in the first place by the Soviet role in training and arming the modern Somali army of 20,000 men.

The official reason given by the Soviet Union for its military intervention in the Ogaden fell away in March 1978 when the Somali army withdrew all its units to its own side of the border. Yet the level of Soviet and Cuban military support actually rose after the fighting had shifted to Eritrea and after the Somali withdrawal. Unlike Somalia, the Eritreans could not be accused of 'aggression against Ethiopia's borders." The Russians justified their support of the Dergue against the Eritreans on the ground that they were "secessionists" and that they had the support of "counter-revolutionary elements" abroad. They did not favor crushing the Eritreans by military force; like the Cubans, they saw Eritrea as a political problem. To judge both from their own statements and from independent information, the Russians and the Cubans appear to have done their best to dissuade Mengistu from mounting a major military offensive in Eritrea. They could point to the last sentence in Article 1

of the Soviet-Ethiopian Declaration on the Foundations of Friendly Relations and Cooperation, signed on May 6, 1977, in which "the two sides declare that inter-government relations must be based specifically on such principles as . . . non-interference in internal affairs and the settlement of disputed issues by peaceful means."

Moscow saw its role not just as helping Ethiopia defend its borders against foreign aggression but as helping it by all means possible to safeguard and consolidate the revolution--an objective, according to both Moscow and Havana, that could be achieved only through a Marxist-Leninist proletariat party in Ethiopia. The Russians are known to have been concerned about Mengistu's refusal to convert his military regime into a mass popular organization, as he had apparently agreed to do as one of the conditions for Soviet support. 143/ Although Mengistu continued to promise that he would create such a party, he showed great caution in establishing his proposed "Ethiopian Popular Organization of the Masses." The reason he gave for his caution was that previous efforts (when he was still supported by Me'ison) had proved "impractical." 144/ He had therefore established a center to recruit "genuine communists" as a first step toward creating a proletariat party. The center to which he referred was a planning committee, whose members also included Marxist-Leninist advisers from the USSR, East Germany, and Cuba. 145/ This is probably the first time that the Soviet bloc countries have actively helped to plan a local Communist movement to sustain a regime in a third world country.

At no time did the Russians show the least concern about the possibility that their role in the Horn might invite counteraction by the Western powers. They consistently accused the NATO powers (especially the United

States) and China of military intervention through "third parties"-- Saudi Arabia, Iran, Sudan, and Egypt. The aim of such an alliance, Moscow claimed, was to oppose countries "taking up a progressive path of development and to establish control over the Red Sea. The Soviet Union is against such a dangerous development of events." 146/

Toward the end of the campaign in the Ogaden, in mid-March 1978, the Soviet Union insisted that the Ethiopians had no intention of crossing Somalia's border and that all the prerequisites for peace had been established. What would help restore peace to the Horn was a pledge by other countries--"first of all by the United States and its NATO partners and also China"--that they would not interfere in the future. The Somalis must withdraw their troops completely from Ethiopia and unconditionally give up their claims to parts of the territory of Ethiopia, Kenya, and Djibouti.

With a breathtaking display of cynicism, the Soviet media insisted that it was the NATO powers and China that "supplied weapons to the aggressor"--the Somali army. Furthermore, it was "the Western nations that encouraged Somalia to carry out an act of aggression against Ethiopia." 147/ After Somalia had completed its withdrawal of troops to its side of the border, the Russians took a new tack. They said the United States was planning to supply Somalia with arms in order to establish itself firmly in Somalia, hoping to undermine relations of countries in the region with the USSR and to bar its access to the Red Sea. 148/

#### Perceptions of Soviet Policy and Actions

Only Kenya among the black African states declared itself an active ally of the Addis Ababa regime, but the great majority of OAU member



states supported the Soviet-Cuban role insofar as it was held to be a response to a sovereign African state that had asked for help to repel a transgressor state, Somalia. The majority of African states were opposed to Eritrea's struggle for secession--an aim held to be incompatible with the preservation of the integrity of African states. OAU member states did not comment when the Russians justified their intervention as an effort to consolidate a Marxist-Leninist revolution in an African country.

Egypt and Sudan suspected that the USSR planned to use Ethiopia as a springboard from which to threaten them once the Marxist-Leninist regime was established in Ethiopia. President Sadat told the U.S. Congress in February 1977 that he envisioned the Russians and their Ethiopian allies as threatening Egypt's Red Sea trade route, as well as one of the sources of the Nile, Lake Tana: "Naturally, I am concerned at the Soviets controlling half my water." President Nimeiry of Sudan warned the OAU summit meeting in Gabon in July 1977, as he had before, against "the new socialist imperialism" of the Soviet Union, which was "threatening to turn the continent into a vast area of conflict." Saudi Arabia saw the Russians' objectives as being to promote Communist regimes in the region and to acquire bases in the Red Sea, both of which were inimical to Saudi Arabia's security. Iran, under the shah, expressed similar concern. These four countries took the lead in trying to achieve two aims: to help strengthen Somalia after its break with the Soviet Union and to persuade the Western nations to stand against expanding Soviet influence in the region, which, in the words of Nimeiry, was "a spreading cancer." The Arab League foreign ministers, meeting in Cairo on March 29, 1979, characterized Soviet-Cuban intervention in the Horn as "aggress-

ive" and called for the immediate withdrawal of both countries' forces.

Until the end of 1977, the Western consensus was that the Soviet Union posed no serious threat in the Red Sea area. This view rested on two assumptions. The first was that a country known to be independent-minded and antagonistic to any form of foreign control, as Ethiopia was, was unlikely to allow itself to come under Soviet domination, even if its regime found it expedient to enter into temporary military agreements with the Soviet bloc. The second assumption was closely linked to the first: that even if the Soviet Union did succeed in temporarily establishing a position of influence in Ethiopia, it would in time be extruded, as had happened in Egypt and Sudan. It was therefore believed wise to avoid any military intervention in the Horn and not to adopt a hostile attitude toward any of the parties in the conflict.

Western perceptions about Soviet policy in the Horn, however, changed considerably as a result of the major airlift and sealift operations in late 1977 and early 1978. Cyrus Vance warned at his press conference on February 10, 1978, that the involvement of the Soviet Union and Cuba in the Horn was affecting the political atmosphere between those two countries and the United States--"a matter which we will obviously keep in mind as we proceed with the talks in the Indian Ocean because what is happening there is inconsistent with a limitation of forces in the area which is what we are seeking insofar as the Indian Ocean talks are concerned." The fourth round of Soviet-U.S. negotiations on the limitation and subsequent reduction of military activity in the Indian Ocean ended soon after Vance's statement. They had not been resumed at the time this was written, despite several efforts by the USSR to start

them up again.

There was immediate concern that the conflict might expand across the border into Somalia, which, as Vance said, would "present a new and different situation" calling for possible intervention by the Western powers and their regional allies. Of greater concern was Soviet strategy in the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, and the African continent.

Soviet policy in the Horn and in other parts of Africa was also seen by Western leaders as likely to jeopardize negotiations for a SALT II agreement. President Carter warned on March 2, 1978, that Soviet policies could sway American public opinion against approval of a new SALT accord. He explained: "It is Soviet actions in Africa, and not U.S. government policy, which has created a linkage between arms accords and developments in the Ethiopia-Somalia area." Only a day earlier, Carter's national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, had said that, while the administration was not itself "expressing any linkage" between Soviet actions in Africa and SALT, it was a matter of "realistic judgment" to conclude that "unwarranted intrusion of Soviet power into a purely local conflict would inevitably complicate the context not only of the negotiating process itself, but of any ratification process that would follow."

The clearest summation of the U.S. response to Soviet policy in the Horn was provided by Marshal D. Shulman, special adviser to the secretary of state on Soviet affairs. 149/ He said that it should come as no surprise that the Russians had moved into an area where they felt they had an opportunity to expand their influence; this is characteristic of Soviet behavior. The Soviet Union was able to be on the side of legitimacy

of the issue--the defense of territorial integrity--which is the side most African states were on. "The problem from our point of view arose from the fact that they did so with such obvious lack of restraint. The scale of the weapons they put into the area and the large number of Cuban soldiers they transported there exceeded any reasonable definition of restraint . . . . They were inclined not to appreciate what impact their actions would have. . . . As for the case of Angola they seriously miscalculated what the American reaction would be." The only reasonable U.S. response was to work in the diplomatic field. Shulman said he was skeptical about linkage. "Economic relations are not a feasible instrument because we don't have any trade agreements in force and we aren't able to put, say, limits on credits because these simply aren't being granted. . . . SALT is not a desirable instrument to use because the agreement, if and when we get it, would be in our own security interest. . . . What the Administration has been saying to the Russians is that lack of restraint in Africa would affect the general climate in this country, and that may have its effect in many ways."

Although the Western European nations were in close agreement with American perceptions of the USSR's role in the Horn, their leaders, with the exception of Britain, said little in public. The communique issued at the end of the NATO summit meeting in Washington on May 29-30, 1978, referred to the "repeated instances in which the Soviet Union and some of its allies have exploited situations of instability and regional conflict in the developing world." It warned that "disregard for the indivisibility of detente cannot but jeopardize the further improvement of

East-West relations." But while the summit agreed on a long-term defense program, no specific proposals were advanced for responding to the immediate situation in the Horn.

Typically, China saw the Soviet intervention as part of Moscow's design for world hegemony. When the Russians failed to withdraw from Ethiopia after the Somalis had done so, in Peking Review on April 7, 1978, the following appeared: "One lesson that can be drawn from this is: Once the Soviet mercenary troops step on the soil of an African region or country, they will not quit easily. That is because the military intervention is not directed merely against one region or one country, but is closely connected with the social-imperialist bid for world domination, and its increasingly intense rivalry with the other super-power. The Soviet 'foreign legion', to wit, the Cuban troops, is nothing but a tool of the Kremlin for world hegemony."

#### Outcomes

The USSR and Cuba have emerged as the main strategic allies of Ethiopia. They have replaced the Western powers, especially the United States, as the dominant military factor in Ethiopia and increased their ability to influence political developments in the Horn of Africa and the wider Red Sea area.

However, the Russians have not yet succeeded in their avowed aim of assisting the Ethiopian military regime to consolidate its Marxist-Leninist revolution. Nor have they succeeded in making Somalia part of their proclaimed design of creating a federation of Marxist-Leninist states in the Horn.

The principal, though by no means the only, obstacle delaying the consolidation of the Ethiopian revolution is the Eritrean resistance to Ethiopian and Soviet policies. Despite the considerable Soviet military support of the Ethiopian army in Eritrea, the secessionist forces still remain firmly lodged in the province. Unless the Eritrean liberation movement can either be defeated militarily or be persuaded or coerced into making a political settlement, the future of the Ethiopian revolution remains in doubt. Although the Somali army was defeated in the Ogaden, the forces of insurrection in the province remain active despite continuing Cuban ground support of the Ethiopian forces. Other centers of resistance, especially in the Oromo (Galla) areas in the south, have not yet been overcome. Opposition also still comes from a number of Marxist movements.

From being a state tied militarily to the USSR, Somalia has joined the regional alliance of anti-Soviet states, which includes Sudan, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt. Although deeply shaken by the defeat in the Ogaden, the Somali political system appears to have survived intact. Pro-Soviet elements in Somalia have apparently been unable to change the country's attitude toward the Soviet bloc to a friendlier one. Somalia has been left with a strong sense of grievance against the Western powers because of their refusal to replace the USSR as a source of military supplies.

The Red Sea regional powers--especially Saudi Arabia and Sudan--feel badly let down by the unwillingness of the Western powers to intervene actively in opposing the expansion of Soviet influence in the area. Their confidence in the likelihood that the Western powers would be able to intervene effectively if any of them should be subjected to Soviet

pressure has been visibly affected. Their leaders complain about what they feel to be ambiguities in the policies of the Western powers as well as a lack of political will, especially on the part of the United States, to offer their military support in resisting any further expansion of Soviet influence and to enlarge their military presence in the Red Sea region. Because these Red Sea countries perceive Soviet strategy in their area as a serious threat to their own security, they are puzzled and concerned by the failure of their Western friends to see things their way. This has set up tension between the NATO powers and their natural allies in the region.

As in Angola, the Western powers have been left thrashing about to find means of deterring the USSR and Cuba from intervening militarily in the areas where the NATO powers are reluctant to become militarily involved themselves, even though they perceive the extension of Soviet influence in those areas as liable to upset the balance of power in strategically sensitive parts of the third world.

China has also failed to have any effective influence on developments in the Horn. Like the regional powers, the Chinese leaders blame the Western powers for not intervening actively against the USSR and Cuba. China lost its position in Ethiopia but somewhat improved its position in Somalia, though it is still reluctant to assume a significant military role in Somalia's support.

The final outcome of the conflicts in the Horn of Africa still remains in doubt. While the Soviet Union has gained an important advantage, it has not yet been able to demonstrate its ability to achieve its objectives. While the regional powers still look to the United States and

other Western nations for the necessary support to thwart Soviet objectives, Western policy still appears to rely almost exclusively on local forces to accomplish this aim, though without active military intervention by the NATO countries or any substantial increase in arms to the region.



### Footnotes

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5. John Stockwell, In Search of Enemies: A CIA Story (Norton, 1978).
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7. Radio Kinshasa, May 20, 1975.
8. For the full text of the declaration, see Legum and Hodges, After Angola, pp. 33-34.
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11. Nathaniel Davies, "The American Decision of 1975: A Personal Memoir," Foreign Affairs, vol. 57, no. 1 (1978), pp. 110-11. Mr. Davies was assistant secretary of state for African affairs in 1975. The task

force report was reprinted in Village Voice, February 16, 1976.

12. Ibid. See also Leslie H. Gelb, New York Times, September 25, 1975.

13. Radio Peace and Progress (Moscow), January 6, 1976. This is a Russian program broadcast to third world countries.

14. Statements by Professors F. Kozhevnikov, N. Uzanakov, and I. Blischcaenko, in Izvestiya, January 10, 1976.

15. Thomas Kocesnichenko, Tass, February 3, 1976. All references to Tass are to the Soviet news agency's statements as broadcast by Radio Moscow on the dates given.

16. Pravda, January 3, 1978.

17. Legum and Hodges, After Angola, p. 31.

18. Tass, November 17, 1975.

19. Radio Moscow in Arabic to Algeria, December 30, 1975.

20. Zdenek Cervenka, "Cuba and Africa," ACR, 1976-77, pp. 84-90.

This view was also supported by Sir Herbert Marchant, British ambassador to Cuba from 1963 to 1965, in the London Times, August 16, 1977.

21. Interview with Hugh O'Shaughnessy, The Observer (London), February 26, 1978.

22. Castro's speech to Congress of the Cuban Communist Party; Radio Havana, December 22, 1975.

23. AZAP (Zaire government press agency, Kinshasa), October 27, 1975. For a farewell statement by Li Tung, leader of the Chinese military training unit, see Legum and Hodges, After Angola, p. 21.

24. PRC Foreign Minister Chiao Kuan-lua, in Times (London), November 15, 1975.

25. Statement by Chiao Kuan-lua in Peking, November 15, 1975.
26. Peking Review, no. 391, September 26, 1975.
27. Davies, "The Angola Decision," p. 116.
28. Stockwell, In Search of Enemies.
29. For a fuller account of the fighting in 1975, see Legum and Hodges, After Angola, pp. 13-17, 49 ff.
30. Davies, "The Angola Decision," pp. 109 ff.
31. Brig. W. F. K. Thompson, Daily Telegraph (London), April 11, 1975.
32. Ibid.
33. Henry A. Kissinger, "On World Affairs," Encounter (London: November 1978), pp. 9-25.
34. David Martin, The Observer (London), August 24, 1975.
35. Radio Luanda, May 7, 1975. See also Jorge interview in O'Seculo (Lisbon), April 12, 1975.
36. New York Times, January 12, 1976.
37. Stockwell, In Search of Enemies.
38. Martin, in The Observer, August 24, 1975.
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40. Personal report to the author by Dr. Jonas Savimbi in September 1975.
41. Martin, in The Observer, August 24, 1975.
42. Leslie H. Gelb, New York Times, September 25, 1975.
43. Davies, "The Angola Decision."
44. Nature and Extent of the South African Defence Forces' (SADF) Involvement in the Angolan Conflict, White Paper published by the Government of South Africa (Pretoria: February 1977). Hereafter SADF report.

45. Legum and Hodges, After Angola.
46. Thompson, in Daily Telegraph, April 11, 1975.
47. Davies, "The Angola Decision," p. 121.
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49. AZAP, December 20, 1975.
50. Davies, "The Angola Decision," p. 121.
51. Ibid.
52. SADF report.
53. M. L. Vellinga, "The Military and Dynamics of the Cuban Revolutionary Process," Comparative Politics, vol. 8, (January 1976), p. 253.
54. Davies, "The Angola Decision," p. 121.
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56. Davies, "The Angola Decision," p. 121.
57. Radio Luanda, January 31, 1976.
58. Davies, "The Angola Decision," p. 122.
59. ACR, 1976-77. p. 848.
60. Processo (Mexico City), January 1977.
61. See Bradford Dismukes and James McConnell, eds. Soviet Naval Diplomacy: From the June War to Angola (London: Pergamon Press, 1979 Forthcoming).
62. Washington Post, January 7, 1976.
63. Dismukes and McConnell, Soviet Naval Diplomacy, have tentatively suggested that the LST and the DDG might have been needed to evacuate Soviet military personnel from Angola if the South African army's operations had succeeded. This does not appear to fit in with the logistical requirements of evacuation.
64. SADF report.

65. Ibid.
66. Stockwell, In Search of Enemies; also Legum and Hodges, After Angola, p. 28; and International Herald-Tribune (Paris), February 3 and 12, 1976.
67. Pravda, June 16, 1961.
68. Michael Kaufman, New York Times, December 28, 1975.
69. Colin Legum, "The Soviet Union, China and the West in Southern Africa," Foreign Affairs; vol. 54, no. 4 (1976), pp. 745-62.
70. Statement to the author by a Soviet diplomatic observer at a seminar on the Indian Ocean held at Brussels University in 1970.
71. Tass, November 17, 1975.
72. French military intelligence source.
73. Radio Luanda, January 29, 1976.
74. Manchester Guardian, November 20, 1975.
75. Tass, November 12, 1975.
76. The Observer, November 12, 1978.
77. Davies, "The Angola Decision."
78. Kissinger, "On World Affairs."
79. Ibid.
80. Ibid.
81. New York Times, November 25, 1975.
82. Dr. Agostinho Neto had said in an interview with the Nigerian magazine Afriscope (Lagos, August 1975): "MPLA is not a Marxist-Leninist organization. Also, our leadership is not Marxist-Leninist. Some of us have read Marx and Lenin, but we don't consider ourselves Marxist-Leninists. We are a large organization with various shades of opinion

and different types of groups united solely under the flag of liberation. As a heterogeneous organization, it contains both Marxist and other points of view. But it is true that many people in the world consider the MPLA as a movement linked with Moscow. Again, I say this is untrue. This image exists only in the imagination of outsiders."

83. For a more detailed account of these developments see Colin Legum and Bill Lee, Conflict in the Horn of Africa (New York: Africana, 1977); and Continuing Conflict in the Horn of Africa (Africana, 1979).

84. Legum and Lee, Conflict in the Horn of Africa, p. 10.

85. For an excellent exposition of the Russians' historic interest in the area, see Edward Wilson, Russia and Black Africa Before World War II (Africana, 1974).

86. Pravda, July 26, 1964.

87. Reported by New China News Agency, March 14, 1978.

88. ACR, 1978-79.

89. This statement was repeated to the author by an aide to Somalia's President Siad Barre. Radio Moscow, March 9, 1977.

90. Statement by Cuba's vice-president, Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, The Observer, February 26, 1978.

91. Le Monde (Paris); quoted in Legum and Lee, Conflict in the Horn of Africa, p. 94.

92. Legum and Lee, Conflict in the Horn of Africa, p. 94.

93. Ibid.

94. Al Yaqa (Kuwait), June 27, 1977.

95. Washington Post, July 22, 1977.

96. For the text of the full statement, see ACR, 1977-78. p. A108.

97. Washington Post, September 26, 1977.
98. A full account of Dr. Kevin Cahill's message is given in Newsweek, September 26, 1977.
99. Interview with Andre de Borchgrave, Newsweek, July 10, 1978.
100. Air Force Magazine, March 1978.
101. Desmond Wettern, Daily Telegraph, February 23, 1978.
102. Mike Wells, The Guardian (Manchester), January 20, 1978.
103. James Reston, International Herald-Tribune, February 7, 1978.
104. David Lamb, in Ibid.
105. Newsweek, January 23, 1978.
106. Ibid., March 5, 1978.
107. Don Oberdorfer, Washington Post, March 5, 1978.
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112. The Guardian, February 3, 1978.
113. Daily Telegraph, February 25, 1978.
114. New York Times, February 25, 1978.
115. International Herald-Tribune, January 21-22, 1978.
116. Tass, January 18, 1978.
117. Daily Telegraph, January 17, 1978.
118. International Herald-Tribune, February 27, 1978.
119. The Guardian, February 11, 1978.
120. International Herald-Tribune, February 27, 1978.
121. Daily Telegraph, March 1, 1978.

122. Briefing by John Trattner, director of the Office of Press Relations, U.S. Department of State, January 30, 1979.
123. International Herald-Tribune, January 23, 1978.
124. Ibid., March 3, 1978.
125. The Guardian, February 20, 1978.
126. International Herald-Tribune, February 20, 1978.
127. Henry S. Bradsher, Washington Star, January 13, 1978; Graham Hovey, New York Times, February 11, 1978; The Guardian, February 1, 1978.
128. Interview with Dan Connell, ACR, 1978-79, p. B223.
129. The Guardian, February 15, 1978.
130. Sudan News Agency (Khartoum), December 12, 1978.
131. Dan Connell, Observer Foreign News Service, February 10, 1978.
132. Ibid.; also Le Monde, February 4, 1978.
133. This was stated by Cuba's vice-president, Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, in an interview with Hugh O'Shaughnessy, The Observer, February 26, 1978.
134. Dan Connell, The Nation, May 6, 1978.
135. International Herald-Tribune, June 18, 1978.
136. Ibid., July 6, 1978.
137. TPLF spokesman in interview with Colin Legum.
138. Radio Moscow, April 24, 1976.
139. Based on interviews of Somali officials by Colin Legum.
140. Vladimir Kudryavtsev, Radio Moscow, December 28, 1978.
141. Radio Moscow, December 29, 1978.
142. Radio Moscow, in French, December 28, 1978, and in English, December 29, 1978.
143. The source for this statement is Me'ison, whose leaders accused Mengistu of breaking his agreement with them.



144. Statement by Colonel Mengistu to Afro-Asian Writers; Radio Addis Ababa, March 12, 1979.
145. This information was communicated to Colin Legum from private sources in Addis Ababa.
146. Sergey Kulik, a Tass political writer, Radio Moscow, March 22, 1978.
147. Vladislav Chernuka, Radio Moscow, March 13, 1978.
148. Tass, March 16, 1978.
149. Interview with Bernard Gwertzman, New York Times, April 16, 1978.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

14-1a

Chapter 14

THE UTILITY OF FORCE

Doubtless Soviet leaders will again utilize armed forces to reinforce their foreign policy. In some instances they may feel compelled to take this course, perceiving a grave threat to the security of the USSR or its global interests. The military also may be used to take advantage of favorable political developments; and, in the knowledge of this instrument, the Kremlin may occasion opportunities for intervention. It would be mistaken to attempt to forecast behavior on the basis of military capabilities; yet, consequent to the USSR's having become more secure by its achievement of strategic parity with the United States and less constrained by the reach of its conventional military units than in the past, the use of Soviet armed forces as a political instrument in world affairs is increasingly a function of decisionmaking calculations in the Kremlin rather than of the USSR's ability to intervene militarily.

In reaching decisions about whether or not to mount discrete political-military operations, Soviet leaders and their staffs may be expected to engage in careful analyses of what might be achieved and what must be put at risk. Although propositions offered in argument may be formulated in terms of matters at hand, there is no reason to suppose that this discussion will not be importantly conditioned by, or referenced to, prior experiences bearing similarity to issues of current contention. If Soviet leaders might consciously ponder past

experiences or have internalized certain lessons, foreign observers, interested to obtain clues to future Soviet behavior, also might sensibly give important attention to this record.

An examination of how Soviet interests abroad and foreign and defense policy objectives fared in the wake of past, but not very distant, political-military operations allows a better understanding and elaboration upon those circumstances in the future when Soviet decisionmakers might call upon the military to help achieve goals abroad, the kinds of armed forces they might turn to, and what these units might be asked to do. Looking back upon previous instances of Soviet political-military diplomacy, it is of value to consider the extent to which antagonists acted in conformity with Soviet objectives following the coercive use of force by Moscow. Also, were favorable relations with actors beneficiary to Soviet military support maintained or further reinforced? Were previously or otherwise sought objectives thereafter satisfied by these recipients? What other important outcomes, favorable and unfavorable, immediately and over a longer term, appeared to result? Considered then might be the significance to these outcomes of the particular character and size of Soviet armed forces that were utilized in earlier incidents as well as their deployment and special activities. To be examined finally in this chapter is the past significance of the strategic balance and specific U.S. military operations to the use of Soviet armed forces as a political instrument.

For inferences and as a basis for generalization, the case study analyses presented in chapters six through thirteen are drawn upon most

essentially. Chapter fifteen, which concludes this study, considers the implications of Soviet coercive diplomacy for U.S. foreign and defense policies, the circumstances that might beckon Soviet political-military operations in the future, and the character of that behavior.

Before reaching conclusions about the utility of Soviet political-military diplomacy, the approach taken toward this matter deserves elaboration.

#### The Establishment of Standards for Assessment 1/

What is an effective use of armed forces as a foreign policy instrument? The focus of the following analysis is on situational outcomes and the performance by foreign actors of behavior desired by Soviet authorities, not the satisfaction of values held by Soviet leaders. Deciphering the motivation of individuals is an extremely difficult, when not impossible, task in any instance. It is as impossible as might be imagined when the subjects are Soviet policymakers. What was on Leonid Brezhnev's mind after the clash between Chinese and Soviet soldiers on the ice-ridden Damansky Island in early March 1969? A responsible leader's concern to insure the security of his nation's people and territory? A visceral desire for revenge or to insure Soviet prestige and dignity? The integrity of his political position within the USSR? His image in the minds of Soviet citizens or loved ones? All of the above; some of the above; one of the above; or none of the above? Serious memoirs, biographies, accounts by journalists and other personality and decisionmaking reports about the policymaking behavior of Western leaders are typically disputed;

similar materials about Soviet leaders have only the barest existence.

But what is even more to the point: Generally speaking, at least at the public level, a confident understanding of the constellation of Soviet decisionmaking authority during foreign policy crises does not exist.

It would be a matter of question whose motivation should be examined if this path was to be pursued with reference to the 1967 Middle East war, for example; and although Leonid Brezhnev seemed dominant in the 1970s, who the relevant and essential policymakers were during the Angolan civil war and African Horn conflict remain matters of dissonance.

Less contentious is the immediate behavior desired of foreign actors and the situational outcomes that were sought by the leadership in Moscow. About these matters there is greater uniformity in the interpretation of verbal and written communications by Kremlin authorities, Soviet media statements and Moscow's manipulation of military and other instruments of diplomacy. The identity and lines of authority of the elite that directed Soviet actions after Ghana seized two Russian fishing trawlers in 1969 are difficult to determine; to gain knowledge about the forces driving these individuals in their actions and whether or not those concerns were satisfied are probably impossible tasks. Much more agreed upon, by contrast, are the foreign behavior and outcomes sought most immediately in this incident by the Soviet leadership; these being the release by Ghanaian authorities of the seized trawlers and crews, and the avoidance of damage to the USSR's image in sub-Saharan Africa. Similarly, following the initial Ussuri River fighting in 1969, Moscow sought to persuade Peking to give up its belief in the utility of violence and its attempt to create a climate

of uncertainty over the future of formerly Chinese territory obtained by Czarist Russia in the nineteenth century, and to enter into negotiations on at least this issue of dispute. Whatever the motivation and further objectives of Soviet policymakers, the achievement of these immediate objectives was the focus of their attention and, we may presume, was necessary to the satisfaction of whatever further goals and concerns they may have had.

Because operational objectives may be achieved in the immediate sense, but yet be lost soon thereafter, it is useful to assess the achievement of outcomes both from a short-term perspective (defined arbitrarily as the period up to six months after the initial use of military means by the USSR); and over a longer term (three years). Thus, durable positive denouements may be distinguished from ones that were only ephemeral. The achievement of operational goals, of course, need not imply the satisfaction of decisionmakers. Goals immediately in mind may be the only ones that can obtain a necessary degree of consensus or appear feasible. Just as armed forces usage usually is tapered to some extent to customized goals, short-term objectives are formulated within a framework of available means, perceptions of foreign attitudes, and acceptable risk.

Yet, to focus exclusively on the immediate behavior desired of actors and situational results would leave open to question more general or strategic considerations that Soviet leaders may have had in mind during incidents, considerations more enduring and fundamental in importance as compared with operational objectives. In airlifting Cuban soldiers and armaments to the MPLA during the Angolan civil war and to

Ethiopia in its conflict on the Horn of Africa, the Kremlin was presumably attempting to do more than sway the outcome of two conflicts. Also in mind, it might be suggested, were the USSR's global competitions with the United States and China, the achievement of standing with new regimes in Angola and Ethiopia, and, with this, the ability to exert greater influence on further developments in Africa and the Middle East. While the demonstration of the global reach of Soviet conventional forces may have been a goal in itself, the future acquisition of facilities for the forward basing of Soviet aircraft and warships also may have been in mind.

Notwithstanding the plausibility of these and other interests, strategic objectives, insofar as they hark back to the question of motivation, are not as clearly demonstrable as immediate operational objectives. Hence while attention is given in this analysis to further outcomes of importance to presumed Soviet interests, we hesitate to say that these outcomes, whether satisfactory or unsatisfactory, were the ones of greatest concern in Moscow during incidents. Thus, for example, in responding to President Nasser's plea in late 1969 for air defense assistance to halt deep penetration raids by Israeli aircraft, Moscow's principal operational objectives were to compel Israel to stop these attacks, to insure Nasser's political position in Egypt, and to reinforce the USSR's relationship with Cairo (including in this case, the Soviet acquisition of military bases in Egypt). Also at stake, but much more difficult to certify as playing an important role in Kremlin decision-making, were the USSR's credibility and position in the Arab world and, more broadly, in the third world, and the otherwise unchallenged supremacy of a U.S. ally and American military technology over a Moscow ally equipped



with Soviet arms.

Developments related to these broader matters, while taken account of in this analysis, are examined in terms of a balance sheet that may include both calculated and unexpected gains and losses--for example, the rapid dissatisfaction of President Sadat (after he succeeded Nasser in September 1970) with the demeanor and political activities of Soviet military men and diplomats in Egypt and Moscow's attempt to use its expanded presence to constrain Egyptian policy, and Sadat's openness to U.S. overtures for a positive relationship with Egypt and assistance to help reduce Egyptian dependency upon the USSR. In short, broader outcomes are importantly considered, but from the perspective of their being sequelae related to presumed interests of the Soviet state, not as related to "known goals" of its leaders. These developments may be more momentous and lasting than outcomes related to the immediate objectives of decisionmakers.

In addition to examining the short and longer term satisfaction of Soviet operational objectives and further important outcomes, what is also of concern is an understanding of the utility of different modes in which Soviet armed forces have been used. All of the case studies consider the political use of Soviet armed forces in situations of conflict or hostility between actors: In some instances, fighting was ongoing and heavy; in others, violence was sporadic or a serious possibility; and, at the least, the political climate included antagonism and tension. The essential role of Soviet armed forces in all but one of the incidents in which they were utilized was a coercive one; the exception being the largely cooperative action taken by Soviet warships after North Korea shot down a

U.S. Navy EC-121 aircraft in 1969. As a coercive instrument, Soviet military units were used to compel a foreign actor to do something or to stop doing something, or to deter a target against either taking an undesired action or stopping an activity that was appreciated. Thus, Soviet warships acted in 1970 to deter a new attack by Portugal upon Guinea and late in the 1973 Middle East war to compel Israel to abide the cease-fire it had accepted. In many instances, a coercive use of force apparently was meant, at a minimum, to deter behavior, but hopefully to also compel an action. Thus for example, Warsaw Treaty maneuvers and exercises in late spring and early summer 1968 were intended to compel Prague to turn back the clock on liberalization and, at the least, to deter the Czechs from going further in this direction. Similarly, the political-military approach taken toward China in 1969 was to deter the Chinese from violent action on the Sino-Soviet border and to compel Peking to negotiate border issues.

In some incidents the essential antagonism was between a foreign actor and the USSR directly and Soviet military power was orchestrated only on behalf of the Soviet Union; so armed forces were used on the Sino-Soviet border vis-à-vis China and in West African waters after the seizure of two Soviet trawlers by Ghana. In other incidents the military were used to secure Soviet interests by coercing one foreign actor on behalf of another. Examples here include the support given Iraq against the Kurds and Sudan against the Anyanya insurgents. In the third world the actors beneficiary to this assistance were usually independent governments of nation-states. The MPLA during the Angolan civil war

and China and North Korea also were not Soviet "puppets". The same did not appear true, however, of the intended beneficiaries of Soviet military support in Poland and Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968. Having little public support, these groups, which welcomed or accommodated themselves to Soviet military intervention, did not engage with Moscow as entities of independent standing, but were used as vehicles to legitimize the USSR's coercive use of force against sovereign nations.

Frequently when Soviet military power was used to support a foreign actor, that recipient's further conduct was probably of more basic and direct significance to the USSR than the behavior by the target at which coercion was directed. The coercion of the second was the necessary step to obtaining the honors sought from the first. For example, although coercing Portugal in West Africa in 1970 may have had its own reward, the reinforcement of relations with Guinea was almost certainly the driving and more important goal of Moscow. In some instances the USSR would appear not to have appreciated the necessary role of acting coercively at all. Consider, for example, the casualty of Soviet-Somalian relations as a result of Moscow's support of Ethiopia in the 1977-78 conflict on the Horn of Africa.

Just as coercive political-military diplomacy may aim at deterrence or compulsion, armed forces, as an instrument of support, also may be used in two different modes: (1) to assure an ally's continuing to do something or not doing something; (2) to induce such a target to do something or to stop doing something. And, too, military force may be orchestrated to both assure and induce behavior at the same time, as Moscow sought to assure Sekou Toure's maintenance of good relations with

the USSR and to induce the Guinean President to grant lodging for Soviet reconnaissance aircraft and warships.

By comparing uses of the armed forces to support--that is, assure or induce behavior--with uses to coerce--that is, deter or compel behavior, the utility of using the armed forces as a "reward" may be contrasted with the utility of their use as "punishment." The comparison of uses of the armed forces to insure the continued performance of existing behavior--that is, to assure or deter--with uses to obtain changed behavior--that is, to induce or compel--permits examination of the relative value of using armed forces for the purposes of behavior reinforcement and modification.

Another dimension of utility that is explored relates to the directness of Soviet coercive diplomacy. At the same time that military force is used to threaten one actor directly, it may also be intended, sometimes even more importantly, to achieve this goal indirectly--for example, by raising the stakes to an ally or patron of an actor, thereby leading that benefactor to discipline its client. Thus Soviet military power was aimed at the Kurds in Iraq not only directly, but also indirectly insofar as it led Iran to reduce its assistance to the Kurds. A similar story unfolded during the 1973 Middle East war. The Soviet military measures and ultimatum that prompted the U.S. Defense 3 alert also motivated the Nixon Administration to exert strong pressure upon Israel to finally accept the earlier agreed upon cease-fire.

"Success" and "Failure"

It is of further importance to be clear about what is implied by the view that a political use of the military was effective or had utility. Such "success" in using armed forces in order, for example, to reinforce the performance of a desired behavior would imply a determination that the actor was otherwise unresolved as to whether to continue to perform the desired action, and that the use of armed forces by the Soviet Union was perceived and did indeed persuade the actor not to change the behavior in question. If the desired behavior was going to be performed in any case, the use of force would be of no consequence, even if the actor did perceive and consider it. "Failure" would imply that the actor did not perceive the use of force or did perceive it but was not influenced by it. Thus, failure can be determined with greater confidence: all that is necessary is to observe the nonperformance of a desired behavior.

Alternatively, success could imply that a use of the armed forces influenced the views and confidence of others around an individual actor, and thereby caused the actor to perform the desired behavior in a more circuitous fashion. Insofar as few have ruled with absolute authority, the influence exerted upon factions and individuals, as well as upon formal or informal policy debates in general, may have been the most frequently effective avenue to a satisfactory outcome. Even totalitarians presumably consider the arguments of others.

The conclusion that armed forces were used successfully where the objective was to modify the actor's behavior, or to cause an actor to do something different, would imply a similar finding--that the actor behaved desirably to at least some degree in consequence of a Soviet use of the military, and that in the absence of this action the desired behavior would not have been performed.

Notwithstanding the achievement of desired objectives in an incident and their continued retention and, too, satisfaction with further related developments, the relationship between the use of force and any outcome may be tenuous or even nonexistent. Favorable foreign behavior may have been occasioned by the political use of the military, but it may have occurred in any event--or in spite of a particular political-military operation.

The political use of the military may be accompanied by policy statements, diplomatic communications, the manipulation of economic assistance and arms transfers, and covert activities. These other instruments may be more or less important for achieving objectives than the use of the armed forces. Such behavior may also clarify or reinforce the meaning of the use of the military, or, alternatively, confuse and undermine its meaning.

Of further significance to the choices made by foreign decision-makers whom Soviet policymakers are attempting to influence are their own domestic and foreign pressures and constraints. As intervening variables, the perceptions, sources of motivation, and strength of commitment of a target are surely of great significance. Although the Soviet Union might clearly signal a threat of the use of force,

a foreign leader may perceive only a weak Soviet commitment; domestic considerations may make a target act against its own better judgment; and nothing at all may avail when an actor identifies an objective with its own sense of destiny. As discussed elsewhere, the "confident use of a strategy of coercive diplomacy" will include a consideration of all these factors. 2/

The sum--clearly a complex one--of the variables influencing a target's decisions is a screen through which the armed forces used as a political instrument, and other Soviet policy instruments, must usually penetrate in order to achieve a desired outcome. Different screens will present differing degrees of difficulty.

#### The Subjects of the Analysis

The case studies, it will be recalled, do not examine a random sample of discrete Soviet political-military operations but consider situations thought to be especially significant and representative of important classes of incidents. The USSR's confrontation with China and related Soviet military actions examined by Thomas Robinson is of unique and continuing importance. If past experience can yield an understanding of future Soviet-Chinese interactions, no more need be asked to make it worth studying. Nevertheless, the Sino-Soviet border conflict shares in common with those incidents analyzed by Michel Tatu, William Zimmerman, and Donald and Janet Zagoria, the subject of Soviet relations with communist nations bordering the USSR (the Vietnam War is the exception).

While China has presented a direct threat to the territorial security of the USSR as well as to political relationships of the Soviet Union globally, the incidents examined by Tatu, the Zagorians and Zimmerman also included serious threats to the security of the USSR from the perspective of the Kremlin. Moscow sees in Eastern Europe a buffer with the West and critical sphere of influence, the retention of which is dependent upon the maintenance of communist regimes dominated by the USSR. The United States did not play an important role in the Eastern European crises studied by Michel Tatu, but U.S. military power was brought to bear in reaction to North Korean aggression and provocations in close proximity to the USSR. Notwithstanding broader perspectives of Soviet relations with communist regimes and direct security considerations that might be pursued, like the relevance of the Sino-Soviet border conflict, it is of enough importance that previous incidents in Eastern Europe might be germane to the question of future Soviet intervention in Eastern Europe, and that past crises and conflict on the Korean Peninsula might be pertinent to situations that might arise again in Northeast Asia.

What is particularly important about Soviet behavior during the Korean and Vietnam wars is an understanding of the forces acting upon the USSR and subsequent Soviet behavior in response to the United States' making war against Soviet allied communist regimes. Although the United States will probably not soon again engage in a Vietnam-like conflict, it is conceivable that U.S. policymakers would seriously consider violence against a communist regime supported by the Soviet Union in response to provocations such as those by North Korea in 1968-69 and 1976.



By contrast with these four sets of case studies including threats to USSR territory, Soviet empire, and the security of allied communist regimes--all close to home in Europe and Asia--the other four sets of incidents subjected to case study analysis took place on the chessboard of the third world. In these actions, in the Middle East and Africa, Soviet armed forces were used to maintain, reinforce, or achieve new positions of standing with friends, as well as to discourage their opposition. The 1967 and 1973 Middle East confrontations and the Canal War between Egypt and Israel in the interim embodied the presentation of serious military dangers to long-standing allies of the USSR by a long-time ally of the United States. In Sudan and Iraq intractable insurgencies admitted serious threat to the continued rule of Soviet clients. So, too, confronted were President Nasser, by Israel's deep penetration bombing of Egypt in 1969-1970; President Sekou Toure, by Portugal's 1970 raid into Guinea; and Ethiopia's Haile Mariam Mengistu, a very new Soviet ally, by Somali military entry into the Ogaden region of Ethiopia and by the Eritrean insurgency in 1977-1978. These five other incidents, in addition to the two general wars in the Middle East, found apprehensive globally recognized governments calling upon their premier ally, the USSR, for support against threats to their nation's sovereignty or territorial integrity. Soviet-Cuban assistance to the MPLA in Angola also went to a long-time ally, but one contending for power in a civil war exhibiting no globally recognized government. Finally, Ghana's seizure of two Soviet trawlers in 1968 hazarded Soviet dignity and prestige in sub-Saharan Africa. Only in the two Middle East wars did the United States become militarily involved, however.

Soviet armed forces usage in these incidents may be summarily cataloged in the following terms: Vis-à-vis China and to meet rebellion in Eastern Europe multi-divisional and complementary tactical air units were redeployed and serious combat was prepared for or undertaken. In reaction to the U.S. drive across the 38th parallel and northward on the Korean Peninsula in 1950 large ground deployments also were made on behalf of China, although not North Korea. Only after the front in Korea was stabilized and U.S. war aims were limited did Stalin render Pyongyang air assistance and the comfort of Red Army units. No Soviet air or ground units ever assisted North Vietnam during the war in Southeast Asia, and in neither the Korean nor the Vietnam wars did Soviet naval vessels support Moscow's allies. Warships flying the Red Star staged a small presence after the United States initiated heavy air attacks against Hanoi and Haiphong in 1972, but this was only to protest the bombing of Soviet merchantmen in port.

Although a large Soviet naval presence in the Sea of Japan was mounted in response to a U.S. naval and air buildup in the Far East after the Pueblo was seized, its timing and Soviet naval air activity indicated considerable delay on the part of the USSR. When, a year later, North Korean fighter planes shot down a U.S. Navy EC-121 aircraft and the United States deployed more powerful forces yet, Moscow's response was a very small Soviet naval presence aimed at monitoring the U.S. military buildup and the U.S. search and rescue effort which was assisted. No Soviet military support was given to Pyongyang in the

face of the U.S. show of force following the 1976 murder of two U.S. army officers by North Korean soldiers in the Korean Demilitarized Zone.

In contrast to a minimal use of only naval forces in the 1967 Middle East war, when Arabs and Israelis again went to war in 1973 the Kremlin ordered not only naval activities to counter the Sixth Fleet, but also a major resupply of Egyptian and Syrian armed forces by military transport aircraft (as well as by merchant vessels) and the alert of airborne divisions for possible deployment to the Middle East. To halt Israel's unbridled air activity over Egypt during the intervening Canal War, Soviet ground-based and fighter plane air defense units were deployed to Egypt and the USSR accepted this responsibility as its own. Small tactical aircraft units also aided Sudan and Iraq against the Anyanya and Kurdish rebellions, respectively. Soviet naval units were deployed to the scene on the occasion of each of the four African incidents examined (excluding the insurgency in Sudan). In the two instances of on-going violence--that is, the Angolan civil war and Ethiopian-Somalian conflict--Moscow also utilized Soviet transport aircraft to support its clients.

#### The Satisfaction of Operational Objectives

Soviet armed forces, when used as a political instrument in the past, were an uncertain means for achieving specific objectives abroad. The occurrence of positive outcomes in incidents and their retention for at least a few years varied greatly with contextual circumstances and with how Soviet military power was utilized. The realization of favorable outcomes of a broader quality important to Soviet interests also was

problematic. The analogy of a hammer is useful: Having a large hammer may be helpful in some instances; in others a small one may accomplish what a larger one cannot; and very different results may be obtained if the type of hammer used is of a carpenter's, jeweler's, or auto-body repair type. In still other instances, though, a hammer simply is not appropriate to the job and, if used, may cause serious damage rather than be an aid to construction or repair, this being noticeable sometimes immediately, but in other instances, only after some greater length of time has elapsed. In short, as an instrument that might be drawn on indiscriminately to obtain objectives abroad, Soviet political-military operations were an unreliable handle for obtaining lasting favorable outcomes.

#### China and Eastern Europe

The two most serious challenges to the USSR, in reaction to which very large discrete political-military operations were mounted, were China's heightened hostility toward the Soviet Union in the late 1960's and periodic rebellions in Eastern Europe. As a discrete political instrument, Soviet military power was little short of a flop when it was used to intimidate regimes not to the Kremlin's liking in Eastern Europe; and although Moscow did achieve its operational objectives vis-à-vis Peking, many months of military activity elapsed first and the Kremlin finally had to go so far as to raise the possibility of waging nuclear war against China.

The Soviet military buildup east of the Urals and in Mongolia in the several years prior to the clash on March 15, 1969, was not followed by more conciliatory Chinese behavior, but by Peking evidencing hostility to Moscow with increased boldness. The series of border actions and further Soviet military buildup after the March 2, 1969 violence, as a campaign of intimidation, did not provoke new Chinese border provocations and may indeed have been an effective deterrent, but it was only after Soviet envoys and other representatives unsheathed the threat of a nuclear strike against China that Peking felt compelled to enter negotiations with the USSR. Yet, even then, Peking was not compelled to accept Soviet positions in these negotiations, but used the talks as a hedge against preemptive Soviet military action and to buy time to structure a more favorable global political environment for confrontation with the USSR and to build up its own military capabilities. Thus the USSR obtained a bare minimum after exerting maximum force short of war. By going to that extreme to purchase a secure border in the short term, a dynamic extremely prejudicial to Soviet security and global interests in the long term was set in motion.

As Thomas Robinson argues, the fear generated by this coercive diplomacy, which compelled an isolated China in 1969 to negotiations, also led Peking to mortgage its economic, foreign and defense policy in order to create a greater military and global political base--that is, an anti-Soviet global entente--that would make the USSR more wary of threatening China and give Peking the greater wherewithal to resist

coercion. A decade after the Ussuri River clashes China was in political and economic alliance with the United States, Europe and Japan against the USSR. Attempts to intimidate China and the expanded Soviet air and naval presence in the Far East and Sea of Japan, which may be related in part to the Sino-Soviet conflict, as a by-product kindled serious Japanese anxiety about Soviet intentions and reinforced Tokyo's interest in closer relations with Peking and the acquisition of more capable Self Defense Forces; while the United States and Europe were made doubly suspicious of the USSR when Moscow elected to dramatically increase the capabilities of its conventional forces in the Far East at the same time Soviet forces in Europe were being reinforced. Improved relations between China and the United States, NATO/Europe and Japan then became a source of considerable friction between the West and the USSR; the West welcoming a stronger China as a counterbalance to increased Soviet power and the USSR perceiving in this an encircling anti-Soviet global alliance.

In Eastern Europe military power was orchestrated to insure subservience to the USSR and socialist orthodoxy. But the Poles stood up to Khrushchev and his cohorts in October 1956 and were not compelled to reform their leadership or to hand power over to the Soviet-allied Natolinist faction. Movements by the Red Army in and around Poland and of warships in the Baltic may have assured the loyalty and cohesiveness of the Natolinists, but this muscle flexing was to no avail; for this faction could not command the armed forces and remained a party minority with little popular standing. Nor is there a case for arguing that Moscow's show of force deterred a radical assertion of independence by Warsaw. Gomulka was

himself a stern communist, opposed to liberalization and disposed strongly to a firm alliance with the USSR. More accurately, having deterred military intervention with courage, a united people, and a credible threat of violent and determined resistance, Gomulka assured further Soviet restraint by following a course acceptable to the USSR but one which he himself favored. What paid off was Khrushchev's gamble to back away militarily and give the Poles time to pursue their promised course. The political use of force was a failure; which is not to say that the Poles thereafter were able to ignore their environment and the demands of their great neighbor to the east. They could not. But what Warsaw feared was the reality of military suppression; the Poles were not impressed by the mere demonstrative use of force. Moreover, once Moscow backed off and Gomulka moved to gain full control of the Polish armed forces, the Kremlin's ability to intimidate Warsaw by exercises or maneuvers declined even further; although the suppression of the rebellion in Hungary which, in the end, was more than a demonstration, no doubt reinforced Gomulka in following his chosen path. Yet, if Michel Tatu is correct, Gomulka feared West Germany and the prospect of a united Germany at least as much as he did the USSR.

Nor did the deployment of Soviet units in Budapest during the first phase of that crisis (October 23-31) or the slow-motion buildup of forces and actions early-on in the second phase (beginning November 1) compel dissident workers and students to terminate their rebellious behavior and be contented with a promise of reforms. Hence the new team

led by Imre Nagy and Janos Kadar who replaced Erno Gero were not able to channel the rebellion politically. Had the dissidence been quelled in the first phase, at the end of which Soviet military forces backed out of Budapest, Nagy, like Kadar, assuredly would have been satisfied with mild reforms within a continued satellite framework. The persistence of the insurrection and new Soviet military moves were followed by Nagy's turning away from Moscow completely; and rather than intimidate the armed populace, this action by Moscow enflamed it. Moreover, Kadar, who was more loyal to the USSR and impressed by the Red Army, was not made bold to rally Hungarians against the rebels and Nagy. Insofar as this prospect appeared out of the question, Kadar took a back seat to the reimposition of Soviet authority and socialist orthodoxy by force of arms.

Soviet military demonstrations also did not induce effective bold behavior by Czech leaders loyal to the USSR in 1968, either before or after the August intervention by Warsaw Treaty Organization forces. Prior to this definitive action, Prague perceived the various movements and activities of Soviet and other Eastern European armed forces as theater. Dubcek and his associates might have allowed the liberalization to proceed more rapidly in the absence of surrounding Soviet military power, but Moscow's political use of armed forces in spring and early summer did not compel the reversal of abhorrent developments or deter actions newly disquieting. The invasion and physical seizure of control, which the Czechs did not attempt to deter or resist violently, bought the



Kremlin time, but more than seven months went by before the Prague leaders were compelled to accept Moscow's political diktat, and this end was brought about not by a demonstrative show of force, but by a verbal ultimatum delivered by Marshal Grechko.

Moscow's experience in orchestrating political-military operations against these three Eastern European nations is not dissimilar from those operations directed at other times at East Germany, Rumania and Yugoslavia. The East German riots in 1953 were not ended by shows of force or by bolstering the will of the East German authorities, but finally, as in Hungary, by violent suppression. Nor was Tito coerced by Stalin's direction of military pressure against Yugoslavia or Nicolae Ceausescu by demonstrative actions ordered by the Brezhnev team. Like Gomulka and Dubcek, both Tito and Ceausescu appear to have limited the variance of their independent behavior in consideration of the danger of full-scale Soviet military intervention; but this behavior appears to have been little related to discrete uses of the military by the Kremlin. What relationship does exist is one of impact by the specific upon the general--that is, discrete military operations, although failing to achieve specific operational objectives, nevertheless influenced the limits of independence able to be perceived; in their absence, the USSR may have been viewed as helpless and anxiety about triggering violent intervention might have dissipated.

The restoration of loyalty and order in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia was not followed in the next several years or even decade

by the unraveling of those new regimes. Gomulka remained a stalwart defender of the conservative, if not orthodox, persuasion of Marxism-Leninism. In Poland, decollectivization of agriculture, a less hostile church-state relationship, acceptance of economic assistance from the United States and other accommodations, accompanied by a slow but sure tightening and then reversal of liberalization, proved a sound strategy for placing communism in Poland on a firmer footing, thereby providing the USSR a more stable and reliable ally. Still, Moscow could not but consider that its acceptance of failure in using the Red Army to coerce the Poles and willingness to gamble on Gomulka was taken as a sign of weakness in Eastern Europe and opened the way to the insurrection in Budapest.

Like Gomulka, Janos Kadar restored Hungary as a loyal Soviet ally and placed communism on a stronger, national foundation. An important difference between them, however, was that whereas Gomulka followed an increasingly conservative course, Kadar gradually introduced into Hungary the most liberal regime in Eastern Europe, surpassed only by the Prague Spring. The brutal suppression of insurgency in Hungary, no doubt, was a powerful deterrent to further eruptions of independence elsewhere in Eastern Europe in the short term, which was plausible if not only Poland, but Hungary, in a more pugnacious and hostile form, had appeared to stand Moscow down. Definitive Soviet action in Budapest lent credibility to the meaningfulness of the concurrent reinforcement of the Red Army elsewhere in Eastern Europe in November 1956.

The extirpation in Hungary assuredly undermined the prospect of detente that developed after Stalin's death. Yet if Moscow was otherwise prepared to enter into vigorous competition with the West over the then emerging third world and to provoke confrontation over Berlin and the future of West Germany, the cold war probably would have gained renewed vigor in the absence of the events in Hungary. The restoration of control in Hungary and its maintenance elsewhere in Eastern Europe was of fundamental importance to Khrushchev's forward diplomacy in the west as well as to the USSR's strategy for dealing with Peking's demands in the late 1950's and early 1960's.

Hungary, though, was a dark stain on the image of the USSR almost globally and strongly undermined propaganda about principled Soviet behavior and Kremlin pretensions to moral leadership. If protagonists in the West were reaffirmed in their hostility to the Soviet Union, those who would speak in support of the Kremlin, including western communists, became less willing to do so. Thereafter Raymond Aron could not have written an article entitled "Fascinated by the Soviet Union" and relate that, for French intellectuals, "when the master is Russian, the words change their meaning and enslavement becomes liberation." 3/

The blow to the image of the USSR and its allies was greater still as a result of the 1968 intervention in Czechoslovakia. Earlier, many outside of the USSR believed the Kremlin had become more benevolent; and in the third world and even in the West, Moscow had capitalized upon U.S. interventions in Southeast Asia and the Dominican Republic. The August intervention impelled Eurocommunism and the further fragmentation of

the communist world, and any illusions that Soviet leaders had allowed themselves or perpetrated within the bloc about Eastern Europe having become favorably disposed to the USSR and Marxism-Leninism or about Soviet forces being forward deployed at the bequest of the host peoples were dashed. Once again Moscow reinforced the perspective that west of the Bug the Red Army presence was an imperial one, at least as much to control behavior within lands neighboring the USSR as to afford a line of defense distant from the Soviet Union. Although dissidence in Eastern Europe was doubtfully responsible for the further buildup of Soviet military power in Eastern Europe, Moscow nevertheless had greater reason to doubt the steadfastness of its allies in a European crisis or conflict it might wish to provoke that turned against the USSR. It was clear that despite the web of economic and social ties that the USSR had created in the preceding quarter century, its position in the west remained exceedingly fragile. This recognition was no boon to Soviet confidence.

Finally, while Albania formally withdrew from the Warsaw Treaty Organization, the invasion and announcement of the Brezhnev doctrine frightened China into reassessing its relations with the United States and adopting a firm posture on the Sino-Soviet border. To the extent that the March 2, 1969 incident on Damansky Island may be related to this stiffer attitude in Peking--aimed at telling Moscow that China was not a pushover--the intervention in Czechoslovakia may have set in motion a major rearrangement in global relations ultimately unfavorable to the USSR.

Still, to not intervene forcefully in Czechoslovakia required the acceptance of a reasonable chance of Soviet authority over Eastern Europe disintegrating. Had Czechoslovakia been allowed to establish a new socialist democracy and distance its foreign policy from Soviet aegis, the repercussions might have included an even more serious situation in Poland in 1970, an emboldened Rumania, a yet more liberal Hungary, and growing dissidence in East Germany. Meanwhile, with no Soviet armed forces units in Czechoslovakia, both the USSR and NATO would have perceived the Soviet security system in the west and Moscow's ability to intimidate Western nations significantly weaker. While avoiding this dissipation, the intervention into Czechoslovakia led in the end to the establishment in Prague of one of the tightest regimes in Eastern Europe, albeit a regime with little domestic foundation and one requiring a large permanent garrison--unlike in Poland or Hungary; although from another perspective, the establishment of Group Soviet Forces Czechoslovakia reinforced the USSR's military posture vis-à-vis NATO, which was not responsively reinforced. Nor was detente very much delayed.

#### The Korean Peninsula and Vietnam War

Moscow's cautious and subtle coercive diplomacy in response to conflict on the Korean Peninsula and in the Vietnam War did not fail. In these affairs, in which the United States either went to war or was directly provoked, U.S. behavior did conform to the objectives of

Moscow's political-military diplomacy. U.S. forces did not attack Manchuria after Chinese forces entered the Korean War or again invade North Korea after recovering in 1951; nor did U.S. forces direct violence at North Korea after the Pueblo was seized. Moreover, with the U.S. decision to not retaliate in 1968 made, the arrival of a sizable number of Soviet warships around the Enterprise and its escorts in the Sea of Japan and Soviet harassment may even have played a role in compelling the task force's withdrawal. Finally the 1972 presence of Soviet warships in the South China Sea was not followed by further U.S. bombing of Soviet merchantmen in Haiphong Harbor.

To recall the limits of the Soviet Union's willingness to engage the United States coercively, however: Stalin did not attempt to deter U.S. entry into the Korean War or the U.S.-led drive across the 38th Parallel to the Yalu. Had Chinese forces failed to rout U.S. ground units in North Korea in the fall of 1950, Stalin might even have accepted a Western reunified peninsula. After all, the United States had already obtained strong positions in Iran and Turkey, which, too, border the USSR. Nor did Moscow attempt to militarily deter the United States from beginning the air war against North Vietnam in 1965 or to compel U.S. withdrawal thereafter. The 1972 Soviet naval presence was doubtfully meant as pressure upon the United States to terminate the LINEBACKER I campaign against North Vietnam in response to Hanoi's Easter Offensive; and no Soviet military response accompanied the LINEBACKER II attacks in December 1972 aimed at ending the war. The limit to which the Kremlin

went in using Soviet military men on behalf of Hanoi was to dispatch advisers whose skills quietly raised the cost of the war to the United States, as did Soviet fighter pilots during the Korean War. Soviet advisers in North Vietnam, in the role of hostages, also constrained U.S. bombing decisions, while the basic decisions by the Johnson administration to not invade North Vietnam or inaugurate strategic bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong turned on U.S. concern about prospective Soviet and Chinese reactions.

The stance taken toward the United States by Moscow after North Korean airmen shot down a U.S. Navy EC-121 in 1969 also was not followed by retaliation against North Korea, and after a brief interval the large U.S. task force that had been deployed into the Sea of Japan was withdrawn. In this instance, however, unlike after the Puehlo was seized, the Soviet stance was immediately conciliatory and Soviet warships acted cooperatively to support the search and rescue effort. Soviet military units were not used to deter a U.S. attack upon North Korea or even to compel U.S. withdrawal from the Sea of Japan, but instead to induce the Nixon Administration to be satisfied with a military demonstration and to recall its armada shortly; which is precisely what occurred, even if Moscow's diplomacy probably only affirmed this U.S. behavior.

The Kremlin's care to delimit sharply its objectives and use of force to coerce the United States in these conflicts in Northeast and Southeast Asia, if successful in meeting restricted goals, seems to have been received poorly by the fraternal communist nations threatened by the

United States, whose allegiance Moscow was concerned to retain. Intent to avoid confrontation with the United States and in the late 1960's and 1970's to not undermine the prospect for detente, the Kremlin's dissatisfaction of allies was the unavoidable consequence of prudence born out of concern to insure more paramount security and foreign policy interests. Had it not been for their continuing dependence upon the USSR for material assistance, which Moscow was willing to give, these "fraternal" nations might have openly denounced the Soviet Union.

Doubtfully was Peking satisfied by the deployment of Soviet ground and air units in northern China in late 1950 after Pyongyang's adventure went sour and U.S. troops drew up to the Manchurian border. If, as appears to be the case, Moscow pressed Peking to realize the utility of North Korea's invasion of the South and assured Mao and his colleagues that a quick victory could be obtained at little cost, it is likely that the Chinese expected the Red Army and Soviet air units to accept the burden, or at least fight alongside Chinese forces, when things did not go according to plan and disaster loomed. At best, Peking may have viewed Soviet behavior with resignation, believing Soviet-U.S. fighting in Korea would escalate to include U.S. nuclear strikes against China. Kim Il-sung wanted far greater support from the USSR; for while Soviet forces were deployed into China it was apparent that Stalin was not willing to wage war against U.S. forces on behalf of North Korea. In the wake of Moscow's military withdrawal from the North before June 1950 and then failure to use military means to avert the occupation of North Korea in the fall, Kim and his



associates could not have been overly impressed by the Soviet deployment to North Korea of easily withdrawn aircraft or even of Red Army units after the front was stabilized and U.S. objectives were sharply limited.

The Kremlin's delayed military response of substance to the U.S. buildup after the Pueblo was seized also was not reassuring to Pyongyang, while Moscow's behavior in the EC-121 affair and following the murder of two U.S. officers in the DMZ in 1976 seemed to leave Kim disgusted. Only North Vietnam may have expected little from the USSR in the way of Soviet political-military support and been relatively content to obtain only military advisers and materiel; although Hanoi might well have sought Soviet shows of force in 1972 to limit, if not deter, the LINEBACKER I and II campaigns. If the North Vietnamese did not call upon the Kremlin to act coercively to derail the escalating air war against the North in 1965, or did with scant hope of obtaining such support, this may have owed much to their witness of Soviet support given China during the 1958 offshore islands crisis and to Cuba during the missile crisis, when Peking and Havana were greatly disappointed.

These allies' displeasure over the limited military support they were able to obtain very probably did not come as a shock to Moscow. It would have been hard to imagine these friends, in their exposed condition, being gratified by the husbanding of Soviet power lest the USSR should become endangered. At best, Moscow could have hoped only to persuade its allies of the limits of Soviet military power

and the futility of stronger action; although Stalin also might have attempted to legitimate Soviet caution on the basis of a need to protect the USSR as the wellhead of international communism.

As to the longer term, while Soviet deployments in China during the Korean War reinforced the credibility of the 1950 Sino-Soviet mutual defense treaty, the absence of vibrant coercive diplomacy on behalf of North Korea allowed the West more than a hint of Soviet prudence and, with this, a sense of optimism and confidence in increased Western military capabilities. This more positive outlook, as compared with the mood during most of the first year of the Korean War was, of course, also founded upon the absence of Soviet aggression or even a serious probe of Western Europe during the war, notwithstanding Soviet hostility to both NATO rearmament and movement toward the rearmament of West Germany. And if the United States was possibly made more circumspect in its thinking about China in the 1958 Quemoy crisis as a result of Soviet deployments in Manchuria during the Korean War, the Eisenhower administration may have acted more boldly in the Middle East in the late 1950's and the Johnson administration likewise in attacking North Vietnam beginning in 1964 out of consideration of Moscow's minimal support of North Korea in 1950. The limited Soviet support given Hanoi may similarly have afforded U.S. policymakers greater confidence in their actions during the 1967 Middle East war.

Soviet caution in Southeast Asia was essential, though, to the improvement of U.S.-Soviet relations that was finally made possible when

the air war against North Vietnam was ended in early 1968. Soviet military intervention on behalf of Hanoi also might have unified American public opinion, galvanized NATO and allowed the United States to escape the international stigma bought by its unilateral military intervention in Southeast Asia. Moscow's restraint in reacting to the U.S. military buildup following the Pueblo seizure and Soviet cooperation after the EC-121 was shot down also allowed detente to go forward, as did Soviet reticence in reaction to the renewed U.S. air attacks upon North Vietnam in 1972. The Nuclear Nonproliferation and SALT I treaties, agreements on Berlin and West Germany, the development of East-West trade and Soviet economic relations with Japan all were prospective hostages to serious U.S.-Soviet confrontation. The complication of U.S.-Soviet and Soviet-Japanese relations, brought on by Soviet military activity and accompanying statements during the Pueblo affair, delayed and restricted as they were, afford insight into the effects of a potentially larger and pointed Soviet show of force in these incidents. A superpower face-off in 1976, in which the USSR reacted strongly to the U.S. deployments following the DMZ murders in July, might have severely threatened U.S.-Soviet global relations, battered as detente was then.

Although Moscow's allies in these incidents remained dependent upon the USSR for military and economic assistance, their recognition of the fragility of Soviet support in the face of U.S. military power and of the preeminence of Moscow's global interests discouraged trust in the USSR and belief in international communism as it was interpreted in Moscow. Soviet behavior was an endorsement of self-

interest and self-reliance. Whether or not a show of force in support of North Vietnam would have induced Hanoi to openly side with the USSR in the Sino-Soviet conflict during the period of U.S. military engagement in Southeast Asia is arguable; clearly, though, Soviet conciliation of the United States in the instance of the EC-121 helped undermine relations between Moscow and Pyongyang and pressed the latter toward improved relations with Peking.

What Moscow did obtain was no new provocation by North Korea against the United States that might have threatened superpower accord again. After all, the limited support given Pyongyang in the Pueblo case, rather than serving as a restraint, was followed only months after the Pueblo crew was released by the attack on the EC-121. Also purchased was a perspective that Soviet military power could not be manipulated and made hostage. Moscow's distance from Pyongyang in the 1969 affair was a bulletin announcing the lapse of insurance to allies who might get into trouble with the United States on their own account.

### The Third World

Failures were not unknown in the third world and the USSR did not obtain, as a result of coercive diplomacy on behalf of allies there, positions of standing able to withstand serious differences of interest. And too, the ramifications of incidents to which the United States, China and European NATO nations were attentive included serious debits.

Nevertheless, outcomes related to Soviet operational objectives in the third world were by and large positive in the short term and were retained over the next several years. Soviet military units served particularly well in coercing antagonists of Moscow's third world allies.

Moscow did not attempt to use its warships in the Mediterranean to deter an Israeli attack upon Egypt and Syria in June 1967, although the squadron probably was thought of as a caution to the United States against using the Sixth Fleet against the Arabs after hostilities ensued. The Sixth Fleet was not used militarily and when, on the last day of the war, Soviet naval units were deployed closer to the Syrian coast and paratroops in the USSR were alerted after Israeli units moved toward Damascus, the United States was motivated to press Israel hard against further movement in this direction. In brief, although the United States had no intention of acting against the Arabs (at least when they were on the defensive) and Israel did not intend to assault the Syrian capital, coercive Soviet behavior preceded these favorable outcomes.

After the 1967 war, when Soviet warships entered Egyptian ports to deter new Israeli attacks, these further actions appeared to be inhibited; a case in point was the aftermath to the Egyptian sinking of the destroyer Eilat. Moscow's deployment of missile crews and fighter aircraft to the Middle East in 1970 compelled Israel to terminate deep penetration raids upon central and upper Egypt and finally attacks in the Suez Canal area. While Israel was made to face up to Soviet military resistance directly, the United States again was made to

pressure Israel, this including the delay of new F-4 and A-4 aircraft sales and a refusal to issue a declaration of caution to Moscow.

In the 1973 conflagration, neither the United States, nor Israel after several non-consequential attacks on Soviet merchant vessels and aircraft in Syria, took any action to interfere with the Soviet airlifts and sealifts to Egypt and Syria; Israel did not move against Damascus; U.S. military forces played no role in the fighting; and, after Secretary Brezhnev coupled a threat of unilateral military intervention with demonstrative actions by Soviet airborne and aircraft units implying that possibility, the Nixon administration leaned on Israel strongly to recognize the cease-fire on the west bank, which Israel did. It would be a mistake to see Israeli's crossing the canal to the west bank and attempt to encircle the Egyptian Third Army as a failure in Soviet deterrence. The opportunity for this brilliantly executed strategem was otherwise unrecognized until after Israeli troops were on the other side of the Suez Canal.

Coercion also did not fall short in the other two essentially interstate conflicts examined in the case studies (the support given Guinea and Ethiopia) or in the one case of direct confrontation between the USSR and a third world nation (Ghana): Portugal did not again attack Guinea after Soviet naval vessels were deployed to West African waters. Quite possibly, the global condemnation suffered by Portugal as a result of the attack on Conakry and Lisbon's fear of further isolation from the West were sufficient to deter new violence against Sekou Toure's regime; it is also plausible,

though, that Soviet gunboat diplomacy was a necessary condition of Portuguese restraint, particularly over the longer term.

Somalia was clearly disheartened by Moscow's political-military support of Ethiopia in the struggle over the Ogaden region and Somali troops were forced to withdraw from Ethiopian territory. However, Mogadiscio was not coerced by a threat of Soviet military action, but was driven from the battlefield by Cuban and Ethiopian military men armed with Soviet equipment. The same may be said of Ethiopia's regaining of authority in Eritrea, where three years of insurgent gains were lost on the battlefield to the Ethiopian Army with its foreign support. And following the deployment of naval vessels to the Gulf of Guinea in 1969 Ghana released the two Soviet trawlers and their crews that previously had been held in custody for five months. Although Accra probably would have released the vessels and crews soon thereafter in any case, there is reason to believe that Moscow's naval diplomacy influenced the timing of this action and that the Ghanaian authorities felt a degree of compulsion in their behavior. If the Kremlin was, moreover, worried about harm being done to crew members in order to extract information from them, and meant to deter the Ghanaians from this course, no such injury was suffered.

Less satisfaction could be taken with the behavior of insurgent groups threatening Soviet friends, although no ally given military support by Moscow was thereafter placed in a more perilous position by domestic opponents; indeed, each found its position at least substantially improved if not wholly triumphant. The Soviet air support

apparently lent the Nimeiry government in Sudan did not compel the Anyanya rebels to terminate their struggle or Ethiopia, Uganda or Zaire to halt assistance to the insurgents. Those outcomes were obtained approximately two years later, after Moscow's relations with Nimeiry had weakened considerably, and in consequence to a political settlement including substantial accommodation to the Anyanya objectives. Yet, the decision to conciliate the rebels, taken in a climate of poor relations with the USSR, might indicate that continued Soviet military support, which may have been considered uncertain by Khartoum, was essential to the containment of the secessionists.

More effective was the air support given to Iraq to help suppress the Kurdish rebellion. Although it was roughly a year after this assistance was initiated, Iran not only did not increase its level of military backing to the Kurds, but the Shah curtailed what support was being afforded their struggle. The Kurds, who had already been forced to retreat, were thereby made to withdraw and end their rebellion completely. That the Shah reversed his position so seemed related not only to Baghdad's agreement to a favorable border adjustment and cessation of anti-Iranian activities in Iraq, but also to Moscow's expanded--that is, military--presence in Iraq and Teheran's fear of further escalation that might have included additional Soviet deployments and clashes between Iranian and Soviet military men.

Angola was still a different story. With the aid of Soviet and Cuban military support FNLA and UNITA forces were driven from



the battlefield; moreover, neither Zaire, South Africa, nor the United States attempted to interfere with the Soviet airlift or sealift of Cubans and military material to southern Africa. It was of no small importance, though, that the FNLA and UNITA were not crushed completely or compelled to reach a political accommodation with the MPLA, as may be said of the Anyanya insurgents in Sudan and the Eritrean and Ogaden rebels in Ethiopia. Moscow's use of military means was disastrous for their objectives, but neither these domestic movements nor their allies were intimidated enough to give up their cause or to desist in their struggle. Hence they remained a continuing threat requiring, in Sudan, substantial governmental concessions, and in Angola and Somalia, the continued presence of a large Cuban garrison and commensurate Soviet military assistance. Only the Kurds were beaten decisively, this being the result of changed behavior by Iran. However, in each of the other cases, no antagonist was able to improve its position following Soviet intervention, let alone triumph over a Soviet ally; rather, each suffered significantly and had to limit its objective in the direction of avoiding annihilation.

Moreover, with the partial exception of the 1973 Middle East war, no Soviet ally in the third world cases examined occurring after the 1967 Middle East war was made to suffer defeat at the hands of a Chinese or Western ally or other actors supported by a Western proxy; nor was any regime beneficiary to Soviet political-military support overturned. In the October War, although Syria lost some additional territory, Egypt achieved at least a political victory by crossing the Suez Canal and holding a position in Sinai.

But if antagonists of Soviet allies in the third world generally did what was desired of them, the beneficiaries of Soviet military diplomacy did not react favorably so often. To the extent Moscow intended its naval presence during the June War to infuse the Arabs on the battlefield with confidence the outcome was failure. President Nasser was greatly disappointed even if, having experienced Soviet behavior in the Suez and Lebanon crises, he was not terribly surprised. Massive Soviet arms transfers and the show of force aimed at Israel in the aftermath of the war were critical to the USSR's retention of strong relations with Egypt and the usage of Egyptian bases by Soviet warships and naval aircraft. Such was true also of the Kremlin's provision of air defense to Egypt in 1970. Moscow's relationship with Cairo was reaffirmed and the USSR obtained further access to military facilities in Egypt, and, in 1971, a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation. These gains were not lasting, however. The creation of a powerful air defense wall, increasingly manned by Egyptian military men, and Israel's respect for the August 1970 cease-fire reduced Egypt's dependence upon the USSR while, at the same time, Moscow refused to deliver the armaments perceived by Cairo as necessary to end the increasingly unacceptable "no war - no peace" status quo. Exposure of the Ali Sabry plot and Soviet applause of the failed coup in Sudan made Sadat positively suspicious of Moscow's intentions. Consequently President Sadat, in 1972, terminated the large Soviet military presence in Egypt, took over the military equipment manned by Russian units and facilities being developed for the Soviet navy, and denied Soviet naval aircraft the use of Egyptian airfields.

Soviet military diplomacy during the 1973 war did not prevent the conflict from ending with Syria having lost more territory still and Egyptian forces, while gaining a foothold on the other side of the canal of enormous political significance, suffering an offsetting military disaster on the west bank. Sadat and President Assad of Syria were not at all pleased by Soviet political-military behavior and the level of military materiel they received during the conflict. Moscow went as far as it did in order to associate the USSR with the limited Arab gains obtained early in the conflict and to avoid blame for the success of Israel's counterattacks and further thrusts. But rather than secure the image of a dependable patron supportive of the Arab cause, Soviet behavior was perceived in Egypt and in other Arab capitals as calculated to limit Egyptian-Syrian military capabilities so as to keep the Arabs dependent upon the USSR, and hence, responsible for their losses. Arms deliveries and threats on behalf of first Syria and then Egypt were not publicly acknowledged by Sadat or Assad during or after the war. Soviet relations with Egypt, in fact, deteriorated thereafter until finally, in early 1976, the use of Egyptian facilities by Soviet naval vessels was denied completely and President Sadat abrogated the 1971 Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the USSR. Soviet naval support in clearing the Suez Canal did nothing to slow this progression. Cairo's disdain toward this effort, which was made to supplement the work of U.S.

and British teams, symbolized Egypt's declining interest in ties with the USSR.

Why the difference in reactions to the USSR between Egypt and even Syria on the one hand after the 1973 conflict and India following its 1971 tussle with Pakistan? After all, in the wake of the latter violence, New Delhi maintained firm relations with the USSR until the Gandhi government was defeated at the polls in 1977. Most importantly, perhaps, India, unlike the Arabs, won a decisive military victory against Pakistan, leaving no need for a scapegoat. Secondly, the USSR appears either to have done everything that it was asked by New Delhi to deter hostile behavior by China and the United States or offered this assistance preemptively. And thirdly, India appears not to have considered itself or its victory dependent upon the Soviet Union; its self-respect therefore remained intact and a strong need to counterbalance relations with the USSR was not perceived.

Between the June and October Wars Syria suffered a major military failure when it was forced to withdraw from Jordan in 1970 as a result of powerful threats by Israel and the United States to intervene on behalf of King Hussein. Moscow lent Damascus very questionable military backing on that occasion--unlike its response on behalf of Egypt six months earlier and India a year later--and instead conveyed a prognosis of doom to Damascus. If the new leadership in Damascus represented by President Assad was willing to forgive or understand this earlier Soviet behavior, which came on top of the 1967 war experience, the loss of further territory in 1973 represented new confirmation of the limited utility of firm alliance with the USSR. Hence, notwithstanding Soviet replenishment of Syrian

arsenals and diplomatic support given following the October War, Moscow found its relationship with President Assad thereafter rocky. Syria did not offer increased use of military facilities to the USSR to compensate for the loss of those in Egypt; Assad refused to sign a treaty of friendship and cooperation with the USSR; and Damascus took positions seriously astray from the USSR on a number of important issues. To the extent the Kremlin measured its relationship in terms of Syrian distance from the United States, after the 1973 war it witnessed strong improvement in relations between Washington and Damascus.

Parallel to Moscow's experience with President Nasser in 1967-1970, President Nimeiry in Sudan was gratified by the USSR's counterinsurgency support in the early 1970's. Yet even before the USSR supported an ultimately unsuccessful coup in 1971, Nimeiry responded to this support by following a policy of socialism without communism and was increasingly wary in his relations with the USSR. And, as was to occur soon in Egypt, when Moscow then overreached itself in Sudanese affairs in 1971, Soviet relations with Sudan deteriorated precipitately. The access Soviet naval vessels and reconnaissance aircraft obtained to Guinean facilities did appear directly related to Moscow's political-military support of Guinea. Moreover, the PAIGC retained strong backing from Guinea in its struggle to achieve independence for Portuguese Guinea (and the Cape Verde islands). But in accepting Moscow's protection, President Toure, like Presidents Sadat and Nimeiry, became concerned about increased dependence upon the USSR.

Similarly, President Bandaranaike of Sri Lanka, after accepting Soviet military support in 1971, reacted to the demonstration of Soviet and Indian military power in the Indo-Pakistani War by ending criticism of a U.S. naval presence in the Indian Ocean and welcoming U.S. navy port visits and American military and economic assistance. In short, with his regime more secure locally, balance was sought regionally; for Sri Lanka's fundamental interest lay in its freedom of action. In the Guinean case, the Kremlin was not allowed to construct a naval base on Tamara Island and naval assistance was accepted from Peking. That the USSR was able to maintain close relations with Conakry may have been importantly related to Moscow's willingness to not draw attention to its political-military support of Guinea and the PAIGC. So too the Kremlin did not overplay its hand with Iraq; the benefits in this instance also included access to air and naval bases and a reinforced political relationship.

Moscow appeared to obtain firmer relations with the MPLA in Angola and with President Mengistu's regime in Ethiopia. In their times of crisis, the MPLA and Ethiopian forces had their morale bolstered significantly by Soviet support and afterwards especially close relations were maintained with the USSR and Cuba by these large and importantly placed African nations, formerly influenced by NATO members. Both regimes continued to be especially dependent, however, and may find this proximity less palatable insofar as they become more secure. In the late 1970's President Neto was already open to substantial economic exchange with the West and improved relations with Zaire and took a pragmatic view of the insurgency in Namibia.

The Kremlin therefore might be skeptical about the durability of cosy relations with Angola and Ethiopia. Still, Moscow secured in Angola and Ethiopia, as it did in Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, and Iraq, socialist oriented regimes distrustful of the West and offering the USSR special entree. The identity of these regimes with Soviet values should not be overlooked: President Neto declared the MPLA a Marxist-Leninist organization, Addis Ababa accepted considerable tutelage from Soviet and Cuban advisers, and both regimes signed treaties of friendship and cooperation with the USSR. Their greater sympathy to the cause of liberation in southern Africa as compared with opponents or predecessors must also be reckoned by Moscow as a plus. If, in the future, relations with Luanda and Addis Ababa were to sour over differences in policy and military access previously obtained was lost--as in the case of Somalia, which was the recipient of much Soviet political-military and other support--these regimes, like that of Siad Barre, might still represent a gain from the perspective in the Kremlin insofar as the West found it difficult to deal with them.

A broad conclusion about the utility of Soviet political-military diplomacy for the reinforcement of relations with allies is that this support is appreciated and can obtain access to military facilities and closer political relations; but these gains rest on a continued identity of interests and harmony of strategies for the achievement of mutual objectives. The glue between Moscow and third world capitals does not run deep; close relations and Soviet acquisitions are conditional and

provisional. "What have you done for me lately?," is more relevant than "what did you do for me in the past?," once a third world leader has perceived the USSR as overbearing or unsupportive. A decline in dependence upon the USSR for national or regime security in this context is a prescription for a serious reversal in relations. Moscow thus was able to preserve good relations best where governments were especially insecure and isolated from other sources of support; when the USSR was able to content itself with helping a regime retain power rather than roused to undermine it or redirect its policies; and when the demands made upon the USSR were continuously palatable. In short, the status of the Soviet Union typically was not one of imperial overlord, but of guestworker. An important caveat, though: Nations, or at least regimes, sometimes find their needs met and perceive no option except dependency for considerable periods of time. "Put all your energy into remaining independent," Charles DeGaulle may have advised a young monarch a long time ago; but at least for a while, national leaders often are willing to compromise their self-assertiveness in order to retain the fruits of alliance.<sup>4/</sup>

The general point made just above is especially well illustrated by longer term developments in relations between the USSR and allies benefiting from Soviet political-military diplomacy. In the late 1970's President Sadat allied himself firmly with the United States and the West and sought from the NATO bloc armaments, economic assistance and foreign investment as well as support for his bold strategy for obtaining peace with Israel and, with it, the Arabs' lost territories. Unwilling to provide Egypt the armaments Sadat considered necessary to bring about



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a military victory and opposed to Sadat's independent stance in the Arab-Israeli conflict and conciliation of the United States, the USSR became wholly estranged from Egypt. Likewise, President Nimeiry, after obtaining a peaceful settlement of the Anyanya insurgency in 1972, which lessened his dependence upon Soviet military support, drew closer to the West and China. As a part of this realignment, which probably would have accelerated in the absence of the murder of the U.S. ambassador in Khartoum by Palestinian terrorists in 1973, Soviet advisors were expelled from Sudan in 1977. In close entente, Egypt and Sudan vigorously opposed the Kremlin's political-military support of Ethiopia in the conflict on the Horn of Africa.

Although President Assad did not reject the USSR, as did President Sadat, Moscow remained unable to consolidate relations with Damascus formally or informally and did not obtain expanded access to military facilities in Syria. Relations with the USSR were rocked hard by Syrian conflict with the Palestine Liberation Organization in Lebanon. Differences with Moscow also arose over Syrian openness to U.S. initiatives to achieve an Arab-Israeli settlement. Indexing President Assad's independence and flexibility were increased U.S. economic assistance to Syria, Syrian arms purchases in Western Europe, and dips and turns in Soviet arms transfers and the number of Soviet military advisers in Syria. Closer accord between Moscow and Damascus after the 1978 Camp David summit pointed up President Assad's continued pursuit of a strategy different from the one followed by President Sadat and accepted by the United States, not a new found identity with long-term Soviet interests or objectives abroad.

After the Kurdish insurgency was dealt with successfully, Soviet relations with the Ba'ath in Iraq also became less steady. Aside from exchanging oil for Western technology and circumscribing and executing local communists, Baghdad adopted a stance independent from Moscow in the Arab-Israeli dispute, forced the Soviet embassy to move as a result of suspicions about eavesdropping, and opposed Soviet support of Ethiopia directed against fellow Moslems--the last leading to the foreclosure of aircraft refueling in Iraq and expressions of anger over unauthorized overflights. Both Iraq and Syria were also made uneasy by Soviet machinations in Afghanistan and South Yemen.

It is too early to talk about longer-term outcomes with reference to Angola and Ethiopia. President Toure did allow the USSR use of Guinean facilities for naval reconnaissance and refueling transport aircraft en route from Cuba and the Soviet Union during the Angolan civil war; but when economic assistance was sought from the West and the USSR did not provide the desired volume of military assistance, relations weakened and use by Soviet reconnaissance aircraft of facilities in Conakry was restricted. A further cause of irritation to President Toure may also have been Soviet delving into Guinean domestic affairs, as occurred in Egypt, Sudan, and perhaps too in Iraq. Newly independent (in 1974) Guinea-Bissau afforded the USSR a regime sharing a similar perspective on national liberation in Africa and having considerable reason to be appreciative of the USSR. During the long years of struggle Moscow had provided arms, training, and the West African Patrol which, while serving as a deterrent to Portugal, was also responsible for capturing the assassins of slain PAIGC leader,

Amilcar Cabral. But the new government in Bissau did not allow the USSR to direct its decisionmaking; nor was Moscow accorded military bases or even routine access to local air or naval facilities. China, in fact, was a larger aid donor than the USSR and when, in the late 1970s, Soviet advisers became unpopular, dispute arose over Soviet fishing practices, and increased Western aid was obtained, Bissau's ties with Moscow slipped considerably.

On the other hand, but further to the point about short memories, Soviet relations with Ghana did not suffer long term damage as a result of Moscow's coercive diplomacy in the 1968-69 trawlers incident. Ghanaian authorities never publicized the Soviet naval presence--nor did the USSR; and the coming to office of the Busia government less than a year later and the 1972 coup led by Colonel I.K. Acheampong may well have erased Accra's official memory of Moscow's earlier gunboat diplomacy. Moreover, although relations with the USSR remained cool in the early 1970s, the new military government adopted a position of strong support for the cause of liberation movements in Africa and precipitated a period of difficult economic relations with the West. In 1975-76 Accra gave support to the MPLA in Angola, Soviet-Ghanaian economic relations were improved, and military attachés were exchanged for the first time in a decade.

Nor did Soviet relations with Iran suffer as a result of increased overflights of Iran in 1973 following large arms purchases by the Shah from the United States or Moscow's coercing Teheran to withdraw its support of the Kurds in 1974. Thus, for example, when Iran and Iraq came to terms in early 1975, the Shah was prepared to buy arms from the USSR as a partial

counterbalance to the weapons purchases from the United States, which were in some doubt as a result of anger in the United States about OPEC policies.

What were the wider ramifications of these efforts in the third world? Firstly, although U.S. policymakers awarded a substantial degree of legitimacy to Soviet actions that were taken in defense of an existing status quo and which were supportive of international norms valued by the West, the larger the Soviet military effort, the more damage was done to Soviet-American relations directly and the greater the effort that was made by U.S. policymakers to follow policies harmful to important Soviet interests.

The minimal Soviet military support lent Syria and Egypt during the June War and in its immediate aftermath provoked no serious U.S. countermeasures and proved no hindrance to further improved superpower relations in 1967-69. These efforts on behalf of Guinea, Sudan and Iraq as well as the bullying of Ghana attracted only the barest attention and no noticeable U.S. counteractions. In brief, the United States was willing to accept small doses of Soviet political-military diplomacy aimed at insuring the territorial integrity of nations, preserving recognized regimes, and securing Soviet assets (Ghana). Sympathy was evoked, too, by Egypt's suffering of deep penetration raids by Israel in 1969-70, the encirclement of the Egyptian Third Army during the October War, and Ethiopia's disintegration in 1977.

Nevertheless, the large Soviet deployment to Egypt and Cairo's greater dependence upon the USSR in 1970 led the United States to take a more balanced position in the Arab-Israeli conflict, a posture which both

Nasser and then Sadat sought not only as a means to satisfy Arab objectives in the confrontation with Israel, but also to reduce Egyptian dependence upon the USSR. Soviet military support of the Arabs in the 1973 war reinforced this dynamic by leading to further U.S. inducements to the Arabs while strengthening President Sadat's perspective that reliance and dependency upon the USSR was a mistaken strategy for regaining Sinai, Gaza and the West Bank. President Assad, too, was drawn somewhat closer to the United States. Moreover, the Soviet airlifts to Egypt and Syria, the Brezhnev threat and related military activities in the USSR, and the consequent superpower naval confrontation in the Mediterranean during the 1973 War raised serious question about detente in the United States for the first time; although the U.S. support shown Israel also led to serious discord within NATO and to the Arab oil embargo, the latter being disastrous to Western economies and a boon to Soviet oil export revenues.

Doubts in the United States as well as elsewhere in the West about Soviet intentions were strongly reinforced by Soviet military support of the MPLA in Angola in late 1975-early 1976 and of Ethiopia in 1977-78. These African interventions importantly reinforced U.S. willingness to spend more on defense and to strengthen relations with China, and prompted greater caution in negotiations with the USSR on strategic arms limitation and a host of other matters. European NATO nations were also drawn in these directions, and in Africa a number of nations entered into somewhat overt alliance against the Soviet presence on the continent. U.S. unwillingness to counter Soviet and Cuban activities in Angola

played a significant role in stimulating French military intervention in conflicts in Chad, the Western Sahara and Zaire, a result that may have led Soviet allies in Africa such as Algeria and Libya to think more carefully about the indirect disutility to their interests of Soviet military intervention.

The other side to this Western and partial regional alarm in Africa, though, was that Soviet military projection capabilities were accorded an increased measure of credibility and respect. Just as the USSR suffered perceptually as a result of its limited support of the Arabs in the 1967 Middle East war, in the mid and late 1970s doubts were raised about American will and military capability in view of U.S. restraint during the Angolan civil war and conflict on the Horn of Africa. China too appeared impotent and a less worthy patron. Strengthened broadly was a climate for improved relations with the USSR, although not necessarily Soviet influence. Leaders like Joshua Nkomo of the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU) and Sam Nujoma of the South West African Peoples Organization were given reason to rely more heavily upon the USSR for support in their insurgencies in Rhodesia and Namibia. The apparent ability of the USSR to enable its allies to emerge triumphant and to insure their role may have led these revolutionary groups and perhaps others to discount the value of maintaining closer relations with the West. Further to this point, although the USSR lost its military facilities in Somalia in 1977, some suggested in 1979 that President Siad Barre sought reconciliation with the Soviet Union.

A product of the joint appearances by U.S. and Soviet naval vessels in response to the seizure of the Pueblo, the Indo-Pakistani war, the October War, and the civil war in Lebanon was the impression that the Soviet Union could render the political utility of U.S. military power impotent. Uncontested Soviet political-military diplomacy in support of the MPLA, leading to the defeat of U.S. and Chinese clients (FNLA and UNITA), and of Ethiopia reinforced an impression of burgeoning Soviet military power and decreasing U.S. ability to affect the course of third world crises.

Moreover, although a certain number of African nations with close relations to the West took strong exception to Soviet interventionary activities in Angola and Ethiopia, at least as many African capitals were not upset. Going back for a moment, though, the USSR did not suffer in African eyes as a result of its intimidation of Ghana in 1969, an outcome evidently made possible by the absence of publicity linking the deployment of Soviet warships to the release of the trawlers and their crews; nor certainly did the USSR offend African sensibilities by its naval support of Guinea and the PAIGC against Portugal, which too was not played up. In the case of Angola, the considerable Soviet and Cuban effort mounted in 1975-76 was perceptually offset by the assistance given to the UNITA and FNLA by South Africa, the United States, China and even Zaire (perceived by many as a U.S. client and even stooge), limited as this support was as compared with that given to the MPLA. Still others found Agostinho Neto's social values and attitudes toward economic development and national liberation in southern Africa congenial and were therefore willing to ignore

foreign intervention on behalf of the MPLA. A large number of African and other third world nations were highly sympathetic to Soviet-Cuban support insuring Ethiopian sovereignty and territorial integrity. In this, Moscow's claim of principled behavior was reinforced by its abandonment of Somalia, a long-time friend, and the USSR's consequent loss of access to Somalian air and naval facilities.

#### The Tailoring of Soviet Political-Military Operations

Did the Kremlin use military power prudently or provocatively? Was sensitivity shown to the wider ramifications of the use of force as a political instrument? Was the use of Soviet armed forces appropriate and well tailored to Soviet operational objectives and larger interests of the USSR? What difference did it make that some and not other types or levels of armed forces units were called upon? And how significant were particular military movements and activities? Answers to these questions are an important part of an explanation of outcomes.

#### Deliberation and Prudence

Invariably Moscow used military power with great deliberation. In Eastern Europe shots were fired by Soviet troops only in East Germany in 1953, and in Hungary in November 1956 after an earlier intervention and withdrawal. Coercive (as opposed to suppressive) military behavior was not coupled with limited violent action, while warnings and threats were coupled with attempts at discussion and negotiation. Violence was countenanced periodically along the Sino-Soviet border, but Chinese territory was not seized and held, deep penetrations were not made, and engagements were carefully



limited. Like the intervention in Czechoslovakia in August 1968 and Marshal Grechko's ultimatum to Prague in April 1969, the threat to use nuclear weapons against China was preceded by a full half-year of lesser coercion and attempt at more traditional diplomacy.

Particular circumspection was exhibited when the United States was an actor. Prior to the outbreak of hostilities on the Korean Peninsula in 1950 virtually all Soviet military men were withdrawn from North Korea; the later deployments of combat forces into Manchuria and North Korea were unannounced; and air operations were entered into surreptitiously and only over communist held territory. U.S. naval operations were never interfered with. The supportive role played by Soviet military men was again minimal and deniable during the Vietnam War. Yet, the role of Soviet personnel in northern China and Vietnam as hostage during these two conflicts was well placed as a practical support to Peking and Hanoi and as a deterrent to U.S. air attacks.

Notwithstanding the joint appearance of U.S. and Soviet naval forces in the Sea of Japan after the Pueblo was seized, the timing of the major Soviet reinforcement insured against an appearance of superpower crisis; and while the harrassment of U.S. ships was unexpected, Washington recognized these activities as an expression of displeasure over the proximity to the USSR of a U.S. task force, not as a threat related to the issue at hand. In place of this ambiguous Soviet military posture allowing the USSR diplomatic flexibility, Moscow could have shown solidarity with Pyongyang by deploying ground or air units to North Korea, a step it

certainly did not want to take. Moscow's use of only intelligence gathering vessels and several destroyers, the absence of harassment, and cooperative behavior following the EC-121 shootdown clearly portrayed a desire to avoid superpower confrontation a year later.

In the third world, where in contrast to Europe and northern Asia Soviet security has not been so directly at stake, Moscow used military power effectively and with subtlety, demonstrating an ability to minimize damage to its interests abroad while applying its capabilities incisively. Soviet leaders usually were adept at coupling the use of force to some standard of legitimacy; they timed their introduction of military means well and showed good sense in the types of forces called upon; and they were careful not to gloat over successes. They preferred naval presence, covert tactical air assistance, logistical support and the use of Cuban combat formations over the open deployment of their own military units in third world nations; and they recognized the virtue of creating new political facts as compared with the risks inherent in the issuance of ultimatums. In the Middle East, Africa and southern Asia, Kremlin directors used Soviet armed forces not recklessly and not clumsily but with prudence and skill, and to considerable advantage.

When Soviet armed forces were used unilaterally in the third world, at least one eye was carefully turned to the risk of inducing U.S. military intervention. The air defense of Egypt, provision of naval support to Guinea, air support of Sudan and Iraq, the threat after Israel failed to observe the cease-fire during the October War and aid to Ethiopia included either a circumstance of strong U.S. opposition to

the behavior of the target of Moscow's coercion or were founded on the principle of defending national sovereignty which Washington was loath to oppose. The support given Sudan and Iraq, moreover, was kept at a level that remained deniable, while considerable observation of the U.S. political scene occurred between precipitating circumstances and Moscow's actions on behalf of Egypt and Guinea in 1970, Angola in 1975-76 and Ethiopia in 1977-78. Not unforeseeably were Presidents Nixon, Ford, and Carter ill-disposed to counter-military action in these instances on behalf of Israel, Portugal and Somalia.

The arrangement of visits to Guinea and Nigeria, ranging the passage through Chanaian waters in 1969 and absence of any verbal or written linkage of this naval presence to the trawlers' captivity was a performance of classic subtlety and illustration of Kremlin understanding of local sensibilities. Had the transit through the Gulf of Guinea been denounced by Accra as gunboat diplomacy, the Kremlin would have been much discomforted; yet, as long as Conakry and Lagos were prepared to receive the ships, Moscow had a fig leaf. Warships were not sent to West African waters after Conakry was assaulted in 1970 until it was clear that Portugal was internationally isolated, even from the United States. Even then, Moscow only gave Guinea military support at sea. Nigerian and Algerian pilots, not Soviet airmen, flew Guinea's Soviet supplied MIGs; and Cuban soldiers rather than Red Army men bolstered Guinean ground security. Soviet military men were neither made hostages to the security of Sekou Toure's regime nor allowed to participate in direct violence

against Portuguese Guinea. Moreover, by not announcing the role of the newly deployed warships, Moscow avoided agitating its client and minimized the risk of attracting a countervailing U.S. response that might have weakened the impact of the Soviet presence. Nor was the United States pushed back to a position of supporting Portugal. Although the latter might not have been undesirable to the Kremlin, recognition of this linkage by African leaders would not have redounded to Moscow's advantage.

#### The Use of Nuclear Weapons

Raising the specter of nuclear war had a demonstrable effect in the one instance when the USSR reached this threshold. China then quickly did compromise its position and seek negotiations with Moscow. This unique instance of Soviet nuclear diplomacy--not to be compared with the rocket rattling of the Khrushchev era--finds support for generalization in U.S. experience: Historically, when the United States raised the prospect of nuclear attack in incidents, outcomes were invariably positive in the short term. 5/ Like the United States vis-à-vis the USSR in earlier years, the practice of nuclear diplomacy by the Soviet Union might be particularly effective against actors over whom the Kremlin held a position of massive nuclear superiority.

On the other hand, the longer-term outcome of Moscow's nuclear threat against China in the summer of 1969 and major reinforcement of Soviet conventional forces in the Far East, implying Soviet preparedness for tactical nuclear war, drove Peking into a larger nuclear weapons program of its own and alliance with the West. NATO and Japan also were seriously alarmed. To the extent that the Soviet nuclear weapons program was galvanized by the disastrous outcome of the Cuban missile crisis, Moscow should not have been surprised in the 1970s by Peking's desire to achieve a credible nuclear arsenal.

Almost certainly Moscow went beyond what was required to coerce Peking into toning down its border activities, both in the size of the Soviet conventional buildup and the threat to use nuclear weapons. These moves served well as insurance in the short term, but so massive a response was doubtfully necessary. A modest buildup and a few bashings of Chinese troops in border areas very likely would have achieved the desired objectives of punishment and deterrence, if the latter was indeed in question. The prospect of a large-scale Chinese attack upon the USSR should have been recognized as extremely remote.

#### Major Ground Operations

The use of large conventional forces alone to compel Peking to enter negotiations and to show contrition did not achieve the desired results in the spring and early summer of 1969; nor were Eastern Europeans intimidated by the manipulation of large Soviet formations. Warsaw, Budapest, Prague, Bucharest and Belgrade were each faced with active

close-by multi-divisional forces; and in every instance Moscow's threat was stood up to or, as in the Czech case, ignored. That the Kremlin was seriously concerned and might finally order violent intervention was understood. Exercises by lesser forces would have been adequate to reinforce this message. Rather than coerce Eastern European nations, large-scale deployments and maneuvers in this most critical foreign arena enflamed nationalist sentiments or galvanized societies more closely to their national leaders.

Massive forces were necessary to the interventions in Hungary and Czechoslovakia and surely would have been against Poland if Khrushchev had not decided to gamble on Gomulka. No one could say in November 1956 that Soviet authority in Eastern Europe was not about to crumble and that the Hungarian army would not fight; or, in 1968, that Prague would assuredly choose nonviolent resistance. Although the violence practiced in Budapest, particularly the use of terror tactics, stood Moscow poorly in international affairs thereafter, the restoration of authority and absence of further outbreaks of dissidence in the region may have impressed upon the Kremlin their utility. This violence may have done much to deter the threat of resistance by Czechoslovakia twelve years later. Soviet deception and execution of its interventions in Hungary in November 1956 and Czechoslovakia in August 1968 were well thought out in comparison to Soviet deployments in Poland and Hungary in October 1956 and Czechoslovakia in July 1968. These latter actions illustrated Soviet indecisiveness and willingness to negotiate, not compelling resolution. But if the

Kremlin did secure a certain physical control of events in Czechoslovakia in August 1968, its desire to nevertheless avoid violence and other harsh measures in the next six months pointed up the limits of military power as a political instrument when an aversion to force is recognized. The occupation of Czechoslovakia, like the U.S. interventions in Lebanon in 1958, in Southeast Asia in 1962 and in the Dominican Republic in 1965 bought time to achieve a solution, not the solution itself.

#### Projecting Power into the Third World

When Soviet naval units moved toward the Syrian coast on June 10, 1967, Washington did not take this to imply the possibility of military intervention by the Soviet navy, but as a serious expression of concern by Moscow. The military move that caused the Johnson Administration real anxiety that day was the alert of paratroopers, implying the possible deployment of Soviet airborne troops to the Middle East. Preparations apparent for this action six years later helped stimulate the Nixon administration to not only declare a Defcon 3 alert, but also to press Israel to accept the cease-fire. This prospect implied a much greater degree of commitment to Egypt and involvement than could any nonviolent naval activity, excluding the movement toward Egypt of ships carrying naval infantry. With the latter not quickly available and Moscow having no desire to actually send forces to Egypt unilaterally while the conflict went on, the Kremlin's orchestration of airborne units and transport aircraft was especially effective. Tactical aircraft in the USSR, which could have been deployed to the Middle East, could not have been so wordlessly

manipulated to only raise that prospect.

The earlier development of a large-scale strategic transport capability must have been particularly pleasing to Moscow during the 1973 Middle East war. Although President Sadat wanted more military materiel than the USSR was willing to deliver, the Kremlin's ability to quickly replenish distant allies in the midst of conflict was impressive and boosted Soviet standing globally. An important consequence, however, was the U.S. airlift to Israel of an even larger volume of cargo, which may have taught the lesson that this instrument should be used only as a counterbalance or when the United States appears unwilling to use strategic transport aircraft to support an antagonist of a Soviet ally. Taking place in the latter context, the airlifts in support of the MPLA in late 1975-early 1976 and Ethiopia in 1977-78 were particularly telling. These two later actions also proved the utility of marrying the rapid transfer of armaments abroad to the forward deployment of non-Soviet military personnel trained in Soviet weaponry and prepared to fight on behalf of a mutual ally. Politically prudent, as compared with any thought that might have been given to the injection of Soviet ground units, the Cubans were probably no less militarily effective.

Of great importance, the USSR was not significantly hindered in these supply efforts by the need to overfly numerous countries and to refuel enroute. During the 1973 conflict U.S. C-5 and C-141 aircraft were unable to land in or overfly European countries. The airlift to Israel was dependent upon overflight of the Atlantic and the Mediterranean and refueling in the Azores and by tankers operating surreptitiously out of



Spain. Soviet aircraft, by contrast, overflowed Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey. Supporting the Soviet airlifts from the USSR and Cuba during the Angolan conflict were stops apparently in Somalia, Algeria and Guinea, the terminal points being Brazzaville (Congo) and Luanda. A sizable number of African, European and Middle Eastern countries were overflowed in this operation. The airlift to Ethiopia, which included a number of routes, included overflights of countries as widespread as Yugoslavia, Niger, and Pakistan. Although many of those countries overflowed were displeased, most sought to ignore the affair. None, except perhaps Pakistan, were prepared to seriously interfere with the airlift. Only Israel, during the 1973 war, ever threatened Soviet transport planes--by attacking aircraft on the ground in Syria. No nation has dared to fire upon a Soviet transport plane in the air as a result of a violation of its national sovereignty.

While airlifts during the October War, the Angolan civil war and the Ethiopian-Somalian conflict quickly provided Soviet allies the means to fight, the provision of tactical air support to Egypt, Sudan and Iraq filled a critical military gap quickly and effectively. The Anyanya and the Kurds had no good means of defending against the Soviet aircraft, and their external supporters would not back them to this extent. The United States certainly did not welcome the Israeli-Soviet conflict in 1970, and aside from skirmishing, Israel too was unwilling to militarily engage a superpower on a sustained basis. Like the United States during the Vietnam War, Israel was loath to cause the deaths of Soviet military

men, be it in air-to-air combat or attacks upon ground based air defense units. Militarily effective and perceived as representing a deep political commitment, these Soviet actions also included the advantage of operations only on or over the sovereign territory of an ally. Hence, like the air support lent North Korea and China during the Korean War and air defense assistance to North Vietnam, these actions in the third world were also not imprudent. Particularly instructive was the air defense of Egypt: Soviet units took up the task cautiously, gradually working from the Egyptian heartland forward to the Canal area and thickening out positions earlier established on a skeleton basis. Soviet fighter aircraft did not overfly Israel or Sinai. Soviet piloted aircraft in Sudan and Iraq appear to have been similarly restricted. By using tactical aircraft only to defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of an ally, Moscow minimized the likelihood of further widening the conflict while it was itself able to insert a particularly valuable military instrument.

As a result of its gunboat diplomacy in West African waters of more than a decade ago, Moscow could reasonably infer that the usage of small task groups to achieve very limited objectives had considerable utility. Soviet operational objectives were satisfied, these deployments did not lead to a matching presence by U.S. naval units, and condemnation by third world nations was not suffered. Further support of these inferences was provided by outcomes related to the Angolan conflict in which naval vessels were again deployed for limited ends. Aside from just showing the

flag after it became apparent that the United States would not intervene in any major way, these actions were probably meant to caution Zaire against interfering with the airlift or sealoift being carried out in support of the MPLA. Zaire attempted no such action and African nations did not find fault with this naval activity. Hence, again a third world nation was able to be threatened with enough subtlety to avoid a charge of coercion. Further, as compared with the supply of armaments to the MPLA, the airlift and the engagement of Cuban troops in combat and the concurrent deployment south of the West African Patrol and of a cruiser from the Mediterranean to Guinean waters were of only very secondary significance to the West. Detente did not falter because of this small naval activity.

It, of course, was possible--indeed, it may even be said that it was probable--that, in the absence of these appearances by Soviet warships, Ghana would have soon released the interned trawlers and their crews, Portugal would have refrained from further attacks upon Guinea, and Zaire would not have interfered with the Soviet airlift or sealoift in support of the MPLA. These results were nonetheless uncertain; and that being so, the association of small naval operations with satisfactory outcomes and absence of directly related untoward ramifications was a good recommendation.

The special utility of naval forces for expressing concern while affording flexibility was made full use of during the 1967 and 1973 Middle East wars as well as in the intervening Jordanian crisis and Indo-

Pakistani war. During the course of all three Middle East conflicts Israeli officials did not perceive Soviet naval activities to be provocative to their military forces, while U.S. policymakers viewed these movements as cautious and symbolic of restraint. (The dangerous facing-off of U.S. and Soviet naval units in 1973 took place after hostilities had ceased.)

By responding in kind to large U.S. naval displays the USSR reinforced its global image as a superpower and cut short the political shadow cast by task forces flying the stars and stripes. Such was the result of the Pueblo crisis, the Indo-Pakistani war, and the 1973 Middle East conflict. Yet, because of the inability of Soviet naval forces to project power ashore and the desire by both superpowers not to fire a first shot at the other, the importance of Soviet naval forces to the achievement of operational objectives in a crisis was not demonstrated. When Soviet allies did badly in a conflict (the 1967 Middle East war) or were seriously threatened by U.S. military power when they were doing well (Syria in the 1970 Jordanian crisis), the meaningfulness of a Red Star naval presence was sorely imputed.

Wisely, Moscow did not respond to U.S. naval operations during the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Being intent on avoiding conflict with the United States, large deployments of Soviet warships alongside American task forces launching carrier-based aircraft were much more likely to be exposed as bluffs than they were to compel the termination of U.S.

operations. By contrast, the small deployment in response to the 1972 LINEBACKER I operations, placed as it was in the South China Sea, made sense insofar as its goal was to caution the United States against further attacks upon Soviet merchantmen in Haiphong harbor.

As an early and easy victor in the 1971 Indo-Pakistani War, New Delhi had no reason to doubt Moscow. That the Kremlin ordered Soviet warships to follow British and U.S. carrier task groups into the Indian Ocean was appreciated by Indian leaders, notwithstanding expectations in both the USSR and India that the United States intended no military entry into that conflict. In this instance, it was plausible that the extra insurance provided by the Soviet navy allowed New Delhi more confident behavior in the completion of its task in the former East Pakistan. Much less certainty about outcomes and U.S. behavior existed during the Pueblo Crisis and October War, however. The timing of Soviet actions and use of the flexibility afforded by warship deployments in these instances earned little gratitude in Pyongyang, Cairo or Damascus, which recognized that U.S. restraint had little to do with Soviet naval diplomacy.

Israel clearly did not restrain itself in 1973 because of the Fifth Eskadra, as it did not during the Canal War or during the June War. Unable to project power ashore, Soviet warships could not be made relevant to hostilities on land, unlike the air defense forces sent in 1970 and airborne units that might have been deployed in 1973 and perhaps in 1967. The closest the navy could come to land affairs in which its ally was on the defensive was to make itself a hostage in Egyptian ports, as

it did after the Eilat was sunk in late 1967. Moreover, while a small naval force may deter a nation politically isolated from the United States against certain violence, a large task group is doubtfully adequate to compel a state suffering this position to cease hostilities. Somalia was not impressed at all by the large Soviet flotilla marshalled in East African waters in 1977-78. These vessels could have had effect only insofar as the USSR was prepared to mount some form of blockade against Somalia, a gambit entertaining greater risk to Soviet standing in the third world.

#### The Relevance of American Military Power

U.S. armed forces were more likely to be called upon and were better able to deter and counter Soviet political-military operations when a status quo was threatened by change adverse to U.S. interests -- that is, when the United States was on the defensive and consequently enjoyed an asymmetry of motivation in facing the USSR; when Soviet forces were not already embroiled in combat activities and U.S. forces were engaged in conflict; when Soviet leaders were less confident about the ability of their strategic forces to deter U.S. nuclear attack upon the USSR; and when U.S. conventional forces were more clearly superior in the theater of local disturbance or were substantially able to negate the support provided by Soviet military units.

No American President has ever perceived the United States militarily so strong or the USSR so weak that he reckoned war anything but a calamity for the West and acted incautiously when U.S.-Soviet conflict appeared

plausible. U.S. ability to bring death and destruction upon the Soviet Union always was outweighed in importance in the minds of American political leaders by concern to avoid violence against American allies and the United States. Thus U.S. strategic forces were never used to coerce the USSR to withdraw from a position of influence--that is, to revise the status quo. President Kennedy's message to the USSR in the Cuban missile crisis was that a Soviet nuclear attack would be responded to in kind, not that U.S. nuclear weapons would be used against the Soviet Union if the missiles were not withdrawn. First use of a nuclear weapon by the United States was threatened only in response to a massive Soviet offensive by conventional means against U.S. allies in Europe and Japan.

American combat forces have never been deployed into an environment including the use of firepower by Soviet armed forces. Despite the rhetoric of "rollback" by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, the Eisenhower administration kept its distance from Moscow's suppression of revolt in East Germany in 1953 and Hungary in 1956. President Johnson acted no differently when battle-ready Soviet troops marched into Czechoslovakia in 1968.

Serious American military action might have been threatened or even taken in response to Soviet intervention in Hungary and Czechoslovakia if President Eisenhower or President Johnson had believed the United States to be so powerful that it could restrict hostilities to Eastern Europe and triumph conventionally in short order. Not only was the latter out of the question, but by 1956 the USSR could devastate Europe and the United States with nuclear weapons, notwithstanding the even

greater strategic capabilities of the United States. By 1968 the Soviet strategic arsenal was greater yet. While President Eisenhower might have lacked confidence about the possibility of a disarming first strike, President Johnson had in mind only "assured destruction." Both Presidents conceived U.S. intervention as leading to world war and the death of millions, not the liberation of anything.

Nor did the Nixon administration act to counter the Soviet air defense of Egypt or tactical air support lent Sudan and Iraq, let alone Soviet assaults against China in 1969. China, of course, was a bitter antagonist of the United States in 1969 and Soviet military actions then as well as later in support of Arab allies were perceived understandable insofar as they were accepted as having been taken in defense of the territorial integrity of the USSR or Soviet allies. In Eastern Europe, the Kremlin was considered to be acting only to preserve the status quo, this region having been conceded to the USSR as a sphere of influence at the end of the Second World War. When a crisis arose there, the United States always perceived a substantial asymmetry of motivation favorable to the USSR. In these situations, in which the USSR sought to preserve previously made gains, the Kremlin not only held conventional superiority, but was considered willing to go to war; while having learned to live peacefully, if distastefully, with Soviet dominance in Eastern Europe, the United States was not so prepared.

For its part, Moscow also did not intervene violently to change the status quo, not even in Yugoslavia and Rumania after things were



allowed to slip too far. Soviet relations with Yugoslavia by 1951 and Rumania by 1968 had evolved so substantially that, notwithstanding the demonstrative use of Soviet armed forces, actual intervention against these nations might have been taken as actions to change the status quo. This revised background was critical to the possibility ambiguously raised by the Truman and Johnson administrations of U.S. military support for Belgrade and Bucharest, respectively. Even if Moscow was not put off at all militarily in these instances by Washington's verbal warnings and small displays of the flag, U.S. military power might yet have influenced Soviet decisions insofar as the Kremlin contemplated drawn out bloody battles in Yugoslavia and Rumania. A quickly accomplished change of affairs could be counted upon to not provoke the United States; but the prospect of a relatively long campaign of suppression was cause for uncertainty about U.S. behavior.

Moscow also did hesitate in Hungary in 1956. After first intervening, Red Army units were withdrawn; and but for the British-French-Israeli attack on Egypt and President Eisenhower's statement renouncing U.S. military action in Eastern Europe, the second intervention might not have taken place. Although it was fairly clear that Prague would not issue a call to battle in 1968, an important reason for this may have been the certainty of Dubcek and his colleagues that NATO would stand aside and Czechoslovakia would stand alone. U.S. behavior in Hungary twelve years earlier and U.S. diplomacy and the strategic balance in 1968 all pointed in this direction. By contrast, Bucharest and Belgrade did not count upon an ability to defeat the Red Army, but upon anxiety in Moscow about where the violence might end.

Moscow was extremely cautious about using armed forces when U.S. military units were already engaged in violence, no matter that the U.S. target was a Soviet ally. North Korea was allowed to be blockaded and its troops thrown out of South Korea by U.S. forces in 1950, and North Vietnam was bombed without provoking Soviet intervention in 1965-68 and again in 1972. In both instances it was the United States that was defending the status quo. In 1950, while the West agonized about a prospective Soviet thrust into Western Europe, Stalin remained anxious not to occasion conflict between the United States and USSR. General MacArthur's drive north of the thirty-eighth parallel and the threat to Manchuria and the Soviet Far East in 1950 presented a dangerous situation, however. Moscow might even have worried about an Inchon-type landing on Soviet territory. Battle between Americans and Russians was almost certain if U.S. forces had entered into Manchuria and Chinese forces had faltered. Yet this conflict need not necessarily have spread to Europe, for Soviet interest to limit the occurrence of circumstances seriously chancing a U.S. nuclear strike against the USSR was considerable. Rather than widen the conflict further, Stalin might have been content with a holding action in northern China and have been prepared to concede the Korean Peninsula to the West.

The Vietnam War never presented the same risk of superpower conflict as the Korean War because both Washington and Moscow quickly perceived the necessity for tacit limits on their military activity. Although the United States did not consider Hanoi's actions to be part of a Soviet plan leading to aggression against major U.S. allies elsewhere,

care was taken not to invade North Vietnam or engage in all-out conventional bombing of the North; at least until 1972, by which time U.S. ground forces had been withdrawn from South Vietnam and it was obvious that the United States had only limited political objectives. Nor was the use of nuclear weapons ever seriously considered. The Kremlin restricted its assistance to Hanoi to military materiel and some air defense support. While Moscow remained relatively silent about the latter, U.S. policymakers built up to the air war against North Vietnam slowly and remained concerned not to kill Russians. Besides U.S. interest in not provoking China, these self-limitations by Washington and Moscow were related implicitly to a mutual fear of conflict with each other. Possibly, Moscow would have restrained itself if early in the war the United States had threatened North Vietnam's future as an independent state or secured some North Vietnamese territory just north of the border dividing the two Vietnams. Between 1965 and 1972, though, U.S. political leaders were wholly unwilling to sanction ground intervention north of the seventeenth parallel and probably would have remained of this mind no matter what defeats were suffered in the South. Presented with imminent disaster, the more likely choice was bombing of the North as was ordered in 1972. As during the Korean War, each side exercised a considerable military deterrent upon the other.

In the late 1940s Moscow was put on notice that conventional Soviet aggression in Europe or against Japan might lead to a first use of nuclear weapons by the United States. With the USSR's deployment of intercontinental strategic forces beginning in the mid-1950s this option increasingly

lost credibility, however. When the USSR finally acquired the capability to deploy conventional forces beyond a narrow peripheral belt around the Soviet Union beginning in the late 1960s, the United States was already beginning to think in terms of rough equivalence or parity in superpower strategic forces. No American President could seriously consider a first strike against the USSR in a non-NATO/Japan crisis; rather, great care was to be taken not to set dominoes falling that might end in a launch of nuclear weapons by either superpower. Likewise did the USSR appear to worry about this prospect.

In a context of nuclear standoff which, in practical political terms during crises might be dated back as far as the 1956 Suez conflict, forward and otherwise quickly deployable conventional forces have been important determinants of conflict resolution. In the postwar era the United States has never maintained forces able to contest Soviet land and air power aimed at maintaining authority in Eastern Europe. Similarly, U.S. conventional power able to be directed at Cuba during the missile crisis presented the USSR with such poor options as 1) a suicidal nuclear attack and 2) threats to seize West Berlin or attack Western Europe at a time when the United States was more willing to resort to first use of nuclear weapons.

The achievement of strategic parity with the United States gave the Kremlin more confidence in making forward deployments and threatening military intervention in crises. When Soviet military

units were deployed abroad or a threat to do so was made, U.S. policymakers found further escalation unacceptable or were willing to do so only as a screen behind which diplomacy was worked at furiously. A brief glimpse of this U.S. predicament was first obtained at the tail end of the June War; it was displayed sharply in response to the Soviet air defense of Egypt and even more so following the Brezhnev threat to intervene at the end of the October War. Sixth Fleet movements in 1967 and the DEFCON 3 alert in 1973 may have inhibited Moscow from airlifting troops to the Middle East; but if this had occurred, the United States was not prepared to endanger their safe arrival in Syria and Egypt, respectively, or to threaten to join Israel in conflict on Arab soil. Had the 1967 war occurred in 1973, it is plausible that Moscow would have threatened a serious interventionary act before Israel seized all of Gaza, Sinai, the Golan Heights, and the West Bank; which is to say that in 1967 U.S. military power, both strategic and conventional, was a greater deterrent to Soviet behavior than it was in 1973.

In 1970 the United States had small ability to coerce Moscow to reverse its decision to provide Egypt air defense and withdraw its aircraft and missile crews. The circumstances, of course, were radically different from the missile crisis, the only previous occasion when such a large number of Soviet ground and air combat personnel were deployed any distance from the USSR. Eight years after the missile crisis the

USSR had a powerful second strike strategic capability and a credible counterpart to the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean. Endangered was Egypt, not the United States or even Israel. Conceivably, the Nixon Administration could have preempted President Nasser's call for Soviet support or, before Moscow responded, placed some extreme pressure upon Israel to end its deep penetration raids. Had the Nixon administration placed a premium on disallowing unilateral Soviet military involvement in the Arab-Israeli conflict in 1970, its principal option, beyond ship visits, was the temporary emplacement of tactical aircraft in Israel, accompanied by a statement that the deployment was to insure the security of Israel. This policy choice was out of the question, though, insofar as Egypt and not Israel was under attack, the USSR proclaimed its purpose as defensive, and the United States sought to curb Tel Aviv and gain favor with the Arabs.

Punishing attacks by Soviet piloted aircraft upon Ethiopia, Zaire or Iran to compel their termination of support for the insurgencies in Sudan and Iraq could have been responded to by U.S. ship visits, the dispatch of Marine or airborne troops for engagement in joint exercises, or the visit of fighter aircraft in the hope of warning Moscow off. Such a course would have required a considerable risk of exposure however, in that the Congress and American public would doubtfully have supported more than this and the Executive itself was unwilling to engage U.S. forces seriously in these theaters except perhaps to insure Western access to Persian Gulf oil.

U.S. military transport aviation did prove a powerful counterpart to Moscow's use of this instrument during the October War, restocking Israel's inventories to an extent that Egypt and Syria did not obtain an advantage as a result of Soviet shipments. Notwithstanding those later Soviet airlifts in support of the MPLA and Ethiopia, this experience may have cautioned Moscow to the extent of holding off from such support as long as it appeared likely that the United States would act to match Soviet efforts of this type.

In response to a direct provocation or third world conflict of importance, U.S. policymakers typically turned first to the navy and ordered to the scene a task force usually including at least one aircraft carrier. Rather than escalate, the Kremlin's typical reaction was to order the appearance of a countering naval force, usually in the form of an anti-carrier group, to preclude the political impact of a singular U.S. show of the flag. Moscow's timing of deployments, their location, and the activities of Soviet naval vessels generally reflected considerable caution and concern to insure that these demonstrations constituted only a joint appearance and did not imply preparedness for superpower conflict. With almost no probability of U.S. military intervention in the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971, Soviet warships toodled along with the Enterprise task force; the major Soviet reinforcement in the Sea of Japan after the Pueblo was seized followed developments making a U.S. air strike against North Korea exceedingly unlikely; and when, in the 1970 Jordanian crisis, the United States made clear its

readiness to militarily back up Israeli entry into the fighting, which was narrowly averted, Soviet warships seemed not to figure politically at all.

Doubtfully did Soviet naval operations ever deter contemplated violent actions by U.S. warships in these instances, although they may have reinforced U.S. caution. Almost certainly Moscow would have steered clear if U.S. fighter aircraft had arrived on the scene while the Pueblo was being taken into custody and fought off the intelligence vessel's North Korean captors. Probably the Kremlin would not have reacted militarily to quick, limited U.S. retaliation against North Korea then, or in 1969 after the EC-121 shootdown, or after the 1976 DMZ murders. In fact, though, once North Korea had done its deeds, U.S. policymakers recognized them as faits accomplis and rejected military retaliation as complicating a broad range of U.S. objectives and interests, including distancing Moscow from Pyongyang.

For their part, U.S. policymakers did not worry about provocation by Soviet warships but about setting in motion a series of events leading to any form of superpower conflict. Hence in the past decade the United States was willing to come closest to engagement in new hostilities in support of Jordan, a close longtime U.S. ally and object of Sixth Fleet support on a number of occasions earlier, when it was in imminent danger of being overrun by Syrian military power in 1970.



In this instance, the USSR recognized its adversary's strong motivation, sense of urgency, and yet limited objective, and was prepared to stand clear. The United States, as a patron intent on defending the status quo, enjoyed a considerable psychological advantage.

Footnotes

1. Discussion in this section is drawn in part from Blechman and Kaplan, Force Without War, pp. 59-74.
2. Alexander L. George, David K. Hall, and William E. Simons, The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy: Laos, Cuba, Vietnam (Little, Brown, 1971), p. 216.
3. As pointed out by Pierre Hassner, "Western European Perceptions of the USSR", Daedalus, vol. 108 (Winter 1979), p. 113.
4. As quoted by Andre Malraux, Felled Oaks: Conversation with DeGaulle (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972), p. 29.
5. Blechman and Kaplan, Force Without War, pp. 95-101.

## Chapter 15

### PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

Defending the USSR and strategic deterrence remain the most important missions of the Soviet armed forces. Soviet political authorities, though, do not appear worried about an unprovoked U.S. strategic attack on the USSR, U.S. led NATO aggression in Europe, or invasion by China. Although Soviet military leaders are more cautious, if only by training and interest, they are increasingly confident about their abilities. They should be: The USSR has achieved strategic parity, and neither NATO nor China has the ability to carry off a successful invasion.

Besides having massive military power in Eastern Europe and Soviet Asia, Moscow now has at its disposal conventional military forces allowing a near global reach. Routine naval deployments in the Atlantic, western Pacific and Indian Oceans and the Mediterranean can be orchestrated and powerfully reinforced; fighter planes, helicopters and armored vehicles as well as Soviet and allied uniformed personnel can be quickly sent to support foreign friends via strategic transport aircraft; and ground and air units can be sent abroad by cargo vessels when an airlift is unnecessary or infeasible.

These forces are not invulnerable, of course. After all, many nations, particularly the United States, possess warships, aircraft and ground forces able to inflict heavy damage upon Soviet forces forward deployed or in transit. To do this, though, risks not only the Kremlin's application of further ground, air, and naval forces locally and, as may be relevant, elsewhere in the world, but Soviet resort to nuclear

weapons. Only the United States, China, France and the United Kingdom are known to be able to direct nuclear weapons at the USSR, and doubtfully would these nations ever use strategic weapons against the Soviet Union except in retaliation for an attack upon their own territories.

If Moscow does not use armed forces to attack foreign nations outrightly, either to gain dominion over them or to emplace friends in power, it does have the capability, interest and will to threaten the use of military power to influence unstable situations in order to achieve its objectives. The Kremlin has not acted rashly, but the acquisition of powerful and mobile conventional forces and of strategic nuclear forces equal to those of the United States has provided a telling diplomatic instrument to Soviet decisionmakers. The significance of these changes and the record of Moscow's past use of armed forces as a political instrument for future Soviet political-military operations are numerable and powerful.

#### Implications for U.S. Diplomacy

From time to time Soviet allies hostile to the United States or to nations having close relations with the West may be threatened by domestic adversity or become engaged in a tense situation or violent conflict with a neighbor. Directly or indirectly, U.S. policymakers may prefer Moscow's ally to be weakened or even driven from power; and considering local political and military forces exclusively, this might be the prognosis. However, Soviet military capabilities afford decisionmakers in the Kremlin a means to prevent that potential outcome, by violent action on behalf of a friend or by threatening that intervention and thereby making its ally more resolute and weakening the will of its antagonist. The target of Moscow's

coercive effort may be a close friend of the United States or other nation in which the West has an important military, economic or political interest.

But even if no such interest is perceivable, the United States cannot appreciate an association between outcomes conforming to Soviet objectives with the use of Soviet armed forces. For besides any prospect of direct adverse impact upon U.S. interests in the immediate controversy, the successful demonstration of Soviet military power can be a precedent, if not a gateway, to Moscow's reliance upon armed might to secure positions or achieve new objectives abroad. Allowed by the United States a clear field for intervention, the threshold of toleration of Soviet policymakers might decline, thereby making the Kremlin more prone to intervene on behalf of clients or likely to do so at an earlier stage in response to local developments. Watchful third parties also may be discouraged in their resistance to the accommodation of Soviet objectives in their relations with both the USSR and local Soviet allies. Taking another tack, third world nations made more fearful of a Soviet ally or the USSR directly may increase their defense spending and seek an increased supply of armaments from the United States, whereas the United States might have strong reason not to supply the desired weapons and foresee the result of this budgetary change to be economically dangerous. The latter argument, in turn, might lead to pressure for U.S. grant aid or concessionary credits. The United States and its industrial allies may too be driven to spend more on defense and deprive their peoples of a higher standard of living or more stable economy.

In times past, the United States, wisely or not, reacted to local crises by alerting or deploying projection forces with considerable confidence that the USSR could not respond militarily in any relevant way. Almost always the occasion was one of threat to a regime in power or nation having close relations with the United States, thereby affording U.S. decisionmakers a powerful asymmetry in motivation in addition to unchallenged U.S. military capability locally and a strategic imbalance favorable to the United States. Even during its period of greatest relative strength, U.S. military units were rarely used to coerce the unseating of a Kremlin ally or to deny the sovereignty of a Soviet friend. U.S. military activities against Syria in 1957 represented the exception, not the rule. Such U.S. political-military operations now are far more dangerous in that the USSR has since gained the wherewithal to bring credible military forces to bear locally and is likely to be strongly motivated to secure an ally and insure that U.S. military power is not responsible for the downfall of a friend. A related and very relevant implication is that the United States will suffer strong pressure to stand by and watch helplessly when a U.S. friend, having gone too far in attacking a Kremlin ally, finds itself coerced and even subjected to violence by Soviet military power. Although the United States may have little sympathy for its ally's position in this circumstance, it nevertheless stands to lose credibility and to see develop a perception of greater Soviet power. At the same time, Moscow's ally may come to feel particularly dependent upon the USSR.

Using U.S. military units to screen a political misfortune in circumstances when U.S. policymakers are unwilling to resort to violence makes little sense when it means giving Moscow an opportunity to order a joint military appearance perceivable as a deterrent to U.S. military action. In response to an attack by a Soviet friend upon a U.S. military unit or group of civilians (for example, an airliner), or against a U.S. ally, American policymakers may feel impelled to respond militarily, but yet not wish to retaliate with violence. Their inclination almost certainly will be to call upon naval units to establish a threatening presence or show of force. A naval task group, after all, can be easily withdrawn, its movements are not dependent upon the permission of third parties, and it can draw reasonably close to the territory of a vast number of nations. However, to sound a warning these days, a naval force must be quite powerful and not merely symbolic.

To the extent that a naval operation is symbolic and incapable of both defending itself and projecting power ashore in the face of opposition, it is likely to be perceived as an expression of uncertainty and weakness rather than as a warning by a great power that the repetition of such behavior brooks near-certain violent retribution. When the opposition is a Soviet naval force, the impression gained may be not only that the United States is divided or unwilling to become embroiled in a local conflict, even when provoked, but that the United States is more fearful of its global adversary than is the USSR. In practical terms, to appear powerful at sea in the face of Soviet warships will usually require the utilization of multiple aircraft carrier task groups and no less.

The dispatch of one carrier task group in response to a serious crisis constitutes in today's world only a gesture, indicative of interest and concern, but not of a commitment to use force, if necessary, to achieve a particular outcome. Coupling strong language with the deployment of a single carrier group, if it does not raise the risk of the naval presence being ignored, may only insure widespread attention to that result.

Carrier task groups are best used to show off U.S. military power and commitment in non-crisis situations and, at the other end of the continuum, when the prospect of U.S. military action (including use of firepower) is very real. In the latter circumstance U.S. policymakers can couple a large naval presence with language strong enough to caution Moscow to stand back and avoid a superpower confrontation at sea. U.S. warships might also put in a joint appearance with Soviet vessels when it might appear clear that Moscow intends no violence in a crisis in which a Kremlin friend is suffering, thereby reversing the pattern that has developed. A prudently timed U.S. appearance of this sort, disallowing a unilateral presence of the Red Star, might point up to a Soviet client the limited utility of alliance with the USSR.

When a U.S. ally is subjected to a brief burst of violence or fait accompli and a U.S. military response is desired, the airlift of armaments or forward deployment of tactical aircraft might be sensible, assuming the U.S. objective is to insure a status quo. What recommends these discrete political-military moves is the lesser likelihood of their being responded to in kind by the USSR insofar as Moscow wishes to avoid



making a strong commitment to an aggressor when the United States appears seriously willing to become militarily involved. Of course, it does not make a great deal of sense to use land-based aircraft in the face of opposition by intermediary nations upon which their overflight or landing is dependent, particularly when U.S. policymakers are unable to ignore or override this antagonism--as occurred, for example, during the Iranian crisis in early 1979: When the Carter administration deemed inappropriate the deployment of a carrier task group into the Persian Gulf as a means to demonstrate U.S. support for Saudi Arabia and chose instead to deploy a squadron of unarmed F-15 Air Force aircraft that also were subjected to a humiliating flight schedule, the net demonstration effect was no less than questionable--the very opposite of the goal intended.

Large-scale U.S. military intervention including the use of firepower has been contemplated most seriously when an important friend has been subjected to external attack by a Soviet ally or severe domestic violence traced to Moscow or a nation with close ties to the USSR. Recognizing U.S. policymakers to be committed and viewing its own local interest primarily as one of possible gain rather than prospective loss, the Kremlin has been unwilling to engage in a superpower confrontation in these instances. Although Soviet leaders may be willing to probe, the prospect of achieving a new advantage has not been a powerful recommendation to them for escalation to a level of crisis including the risk of war with the United States. Moscow may be particularly responsive to the early political use of force and clear verbal signals

privately given by the United States insofar as these actions are able to reinforce Soviet expectations before the Kremlin or its ally goes further and can preempt an otherwise later need for Soviet face saving.

Past Soviet behavior has indicated a willingness to stand by while an ally is "punished" for a transgression against another nation, including the United States, at least if the punishment is limited in scope and duration and the intent is not to seize the ally's territory or overthrow that regime. Clearly the security of the USSR counts for a great deal more in the Kremlin than does any principle of fraternal solidarity or the particular interests of its friends. Attempts by friends to manipulate Soviet behavior have not sat well at all. Hence North Korea was given only untimely support after the Pueblo was seized; solidarity was even less after the EC-121 was downed; and Pyongyang was left fully exposed in the aftermath of the murder of two U.S. officers in the demilitarized zone in 1976. Moreover, in early 1979 China was able to invade North Vietnam without provoking violent Soviet military action. The Kremlin could easily fathom that Peking was aware of the USSR's close relationship with Vietnam; but at least as long as China's leaders intended only to teach Hanoi a "lesson" in response to the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia and other provocations of Peking, Moscow chose against conflict with China. Doubtfully would Soviet leaders choose violence with the United States as their course

if Washington retaliated with firepower in a limited way against a Soviet ally that had attacked a U.S. military unit or civilian airliner or vessel at sea behaving in accordance with international convention.

Many situations of conflict in the third world will not include the context of an important nation longtime allied with one superpower being placed in severe danger by an ally of the other superpower. Crises also may erupt among nonaligned actors, unimportant or tenuous superpower friends, or actors of which only one is closely identified with the United States or the USSR. As a result, many Americans often may consider local circumstances to not warrant the political use of U.S. armed forces, let alone violent intervention. If the President nevertheless sees merit in the political use of the military or in making it clear that military intervention might be appropriate in particular contingencies, a majority or important minority in Congress might believe otherwise and want to insure against the Executive's use of armed forces.

Although the President remains commander-in-chief, politically and legally the climate of American foreign policy has changed radically from that of the two decades following the collapse of the great wartime alliance between the United States and Soviet Union. Cold War, the extended thesis of containment and tight bipolarity have given way to multipolarism, detente and the salience of nationalism, and the legacy of Vietnam has been powerful: Military activity, except as directed at

defending NATO nations and a small number of other allies, is suspect; the Congress and the public are unwilling to assume good judgment on the part of the Executive; and scrutiny of Presidential decisionmaking runs broad and deep. The Executive must now contend with the War Powers Act, small contingency funds, the Arms Export Control Act, and congressional preparedness to consider and even pass resolutions and legislation undercutting its policies.

No President will relish the alert or deployment of U.S. armed forces or the issuance of a verbal threat of military intervention when the Congress is considering or has passed a resolution that the United States should properly remain neutral or legislation disallowing covert or military assistance to an actor the Executive prefers to support. Of no small significance either as a deterrent to U.S. political-military operations is Executive fear of a strong negative reaction to activism by the Congress if not the public. The existence of consensus or discord in the United States importantly influences perceptions abroad of American steadfastness and commitment; and, rightly or wrongly, a President may be prepared to resort to the military only if he perceives the nation supportive of, or at least not opposed to, his prescription.

Whether it is termed opportunism or a pragmatic disposition keyed to Marxist-Leninist ideology and the dictate of being a great power unconstrained by a pluralist political system, the record of past Soviet political-military behavior indicates a keen sensitivity to U.S. discord, uncertainty and temerity about coercive diplomacy.

American restraint has not been taken as an example to be followed when the cause has related to a fulsome lack of U.S. willingness to become militarily involved rather than interest to avoid provoking a confrontation with the USSR. When the United States might hesitate to militarily support an ally endangered by a Soviet ally, Moscow still may refrain from any military activity itself. The prudent course, after all, would be to have a U.S. ally defeated by a Soviet ally without any risk of provoking a superpower military confrontation. However, the Kremlin also has an interest in being on the scene and appearing at least partly responsible for the triumph of its friends. If the United States is perceived wholly unwilling to countenance violent conflict, Soviet military support of an ally on the offensive is quite conceivable.

Although there is sensibility in wanting to stay out of foreign conflict in which important U.S. interests are not directly at stake, clear signals to this effect including the nuance that U.S. military intervention will not be provoked by Soviet military involvement would seem to give greater confidence and force to argument by those in the Kremlin who would resort to military means and undercut or dissuade those who might think otherwise. Moreover, a favorable experience including, as an important element, U.S. reticence may be expected to provide further support to Soviet interventionists at a later date when U.S. policymakers appeared similarly inhibited.

If it could be concluded that the unilateral use of force by Moscow has been associated with outcomes not unfavorable to U.S. interests, the United States might do well to stand aside and relax on these occasions. American interests, though, have not been made better off as a result of Soviet political-military operations. Sometimes U.S. interests have not suffered very much, if at all, but on other occasions damage was done--for example, by Moscow's gaining access to foreign military facilities, the doubt cast upon American readiness to give firm support to allies and other friends, and restricted economic and cultural relations between the United States and nations made particularly dependent upon the USSR and its allies. The absence of restraint by the USSR also has vented greater argument for increased U.S. defense spending, led to shows of force to reassure anxious allies, and importantly influenced a broad spectrum of relationships between the United States and the Soviet Union.

"Linkage" may or may not be preferred as a foreign policy strategy, but to a considerable extent it is a political reality in that the distrust occasioned by Soviet military interventions affects the conduct of varied negotiations with the USSR, votes in the Congress on foreign policy and defense issues to which Soviet behavior may be related, and relationships between the United States and third nations of interest to the USSR. If it is difficult to be more precise about these effects and easy to say that other developments and elements of Soviet behavior also have been important, it is not difficult to be persuaded that the Soviet use of force in the 1973

Middle East war, Angolan civil war, and Ethiopian-Somalian conflict as well as smaller and less noticed Soviet political-military operations, individually and by their cumulation, importantly affected American statecraft directed at the Soviet Union in the late 1970's. The Kremlin is not unaware of the souring impact of their political-military behavior upon Soviet relations with the West and particularly the United States. Certainly Moscow does not wish to unnecessarily endanger the broad framework of cooperation and negotiations entered into with the West beginning in the late 1960's or drive the United States and its NATO allies into taking military decisions and diplomacy adverse to the security of the USSR.

When major U.S. interests do not appear immediately at risk, the political use of the military, to be effective, requires the guidance of a firm hand, and, to be wise, must be based upon a clearly articulated global strategy dictating that action to be nonetheless essential. Potential criticism at home must be preempted by persuasive explanation and adversaries must be convinced about the strength of American motivation. Even then, and in addition to the danger of military confrontation with the USSR, the use of armed forces still may be mistaken; for though Moscow might be locally deterred, U.S. political-military action might occasion adverse impacts upon American interests, equal to or greater than the unilateral use of force by the USSR.

The political use of U.S. armed forces is not necessarily preferable to the unilateral pursuit of this behavior by the USSR. Aside from the calculated practice of linkage, other diplomatic approaches might better recommend themselves as rewards and penalties to which the USSR might be responsive. These other actions are taken up later in this chapter in conjunction with discussion of the circumstances of possible Soviet political-military operations in the future.

#### Some Constraints on U.S. Force Usage

Sizable U.S. military forces, of course, still can be brought to bear on virtually any crisis on the globe. A single aircraft carrier includes a full wing of the most advanced tactical aircraft in the world; a Marine amphibious unit consists of a battalion landing team and supporting helicopter squadron; and in only a few days a fully equipped Army infantry or Marine brigade could be deployed by strategic transport planes along with supporting tactical aircraft. Yet cheap precision-guided anti-ship, surface-to-air and anti-armor missiles and other munitions, and the acquisition of impressive numbers of advanced aircraft, armored vehicles and even naval vessels by a host of otherwise less developed countries have denied U.S. projection forces their invulnerability. Thereby, the



overwhelming psychological advantage these forces once enjoyed has been stripped away. The threat able to be presented by Soviet naval forces to U.S. task groups is greater yet; in the course of the Defcon 3 alert during the 1973 Middle East war, U.S. navy men became extremely anxious about the security of the Sixth Fleet, notwithstanding its inclusion of three attack aircraft carriers. A Marine amphibious force engaged in a crisis without air cover is now particularly vulnerable.

Within a belt of about 1200 miles around the USSR, Soviet ground and air forces can be rushed more rapidly than can similar U.S. military units. Only to more considerable distances from the Soviet Union can Washington still deploy large forces faster than can Moscow. The U.S. Air Force, though, has been increasingly hampered by foreign opposition to overflights and the use of U.S. military bases during third area crises. First felt during the June War, this hostility was acute during the October War. No longer is this hesitancy singularly related to U.S. support of Israel moreover. In 1979, for example, Spain objected to a stopover by U.S. F-15 aircraft on their way to show the flag in Saudi Arabia and Turkey refused to permit the entry of a small complement of Marines who were to stand by for deployment to Iran to protect American citizens and the U.S. embassy in Teheran if that became necessary. Overflight and stopover rights can be counted upon only to the extent that those foreign nations share

U.S. interests or are extremely dependent upon the United States, and, even then, exceedingly skillful diplomacy is requisite if that nation is not to be alienated. Meanwhile, Moscow has ignored the anger of those who would deny overflight by Soviet aircraft and gained good relations with an increased number of nations that would more willingly grant this permission and allow landing and refueling by aircraft in transit.

Besides issues about the political wisdom of any particular intervention and the inherent dangers of military confrontation with the USSR, U.S. policymakers also must confront questions about the risk of stretching U.S. resources too thinly. On active service are about 400 warships, one million soldiers and Marines, and about 5,500 combat aircraft (Air Force, Navy and Marine). However, discount U.S. strategic forces, units committed to Europe and Northeast Asia, and non-combatant and unready elements of the armed forces, and those units available for quick combat deployment elsewhere are found to be of a much smaller magnitude. Typically, policymakers think of the U.S. third world interventionary capability as including aircraft carrier task groups, Marine amphibious units, and land-based Marine and Army airborne formations (and their air transport). These forces are closely husbanded, especially insofar as prudent military planners calculate the logistics of extended operations and the possible need for further forces in the

event a crisis escalates. When the USSR is militarily involved and the United States is strongly committed to a particular outcome, both politically and militarily it is all but requisite to send no less than two carrier groups when the Navy is the chosen instrument. Yet to deploy two carriers distant from their normal operating areas means stretching the fleet terribly taut. What must also be kept in mind, moreover, when the USSR becomes militarily involved, is the ability to otherwise fulfill major alliance obligations and demands that might arise in the midst of, or as a result of, a new commitment of military resources. The contingency of military intervention in the Persian Gulf raises these questions acutely.

#### The Issue of Soviet Strategic "Advantage"

Some have argued that in the 1980's as a result of current Soviet and U.S. strategic weapons procurement programs: 1) a Soviet first launch of ICBMs can be calculated to destroy an extremely large portion of the U.S. land-based ICBM force while U.S. forces will have no such ability; and that 2) in consequence to a Soviet first strike, U.S. decisionmakers would be paralyzed because the possible targets of U.S. non-ICBM strategic nuclear forces would include only civilian centers, an attack upon which would be expected to lead to an even larger Soviet attack upon U.S. population centers in consideration of much larger remaining Soviet nuclear forces.

A memorandum prepared by Paul Nitze of the Committee on the Present

Danger argues:

When their [Soviet] accuracy approximates a tenth of a mile, around 90 percent of our silos will become vulnerable to an attack by a single RV [re-entry vehicle--that is, warhead] against each silo, provided that additional RVs are programmed to substitute for missiles that fail during their launch phase...If we were to use all our MINUTEMEN III, taking account of their improved accuracy and the substitution of MARK-12A for MARK-12RVs, it is unlikely we could destroy more than 65 percent of the Soviet ICBM silos. 1/

About the decisionmaker's calculus, the words of the Committee on the Present Danger are as follows:

We do not have to assume that the Soviet Union will actually attack U.S. strategic forces. The point is that they will have the capability to increase their advantage with a counterforce first strike. After such a first strike, the United States would still have a capability for a second-strike retaliation against Soviet economic and political targets - in plain words, against their "hostage" cities and industrial centers. If Soviet civil defense failed, we could do "unacceptable damage" to them, but their forces held in reserve would still be greater than ours, and we have no effective civil (or air) defense. Their third-strike potential would leave the U.S. with a dangerously inadequate deterrent. 2/

This, it has been suggested, constitutes a strategic imbalance favorable to the USSR and of value in a crisis insofar as Soviet leaders would be more confident that the United States would not launch nuclear weapons first and could be faced down by a Soviet threat to use nuclear weapons. One might thus wonder about the proclivity and success of Soviet political-military operations in this strategic environment. Notwithstanding the accuracy of the above forecast of strategic force structures, strong argument has been made against the meaningfulness of the above calculus to responsible Soviet military planners, let alone Kremlin political leaders who would have to be convinced that U.S. policymakers would be so paralyzed that the USSR could confidently ignore U.S. warnings about resort to nuclear weapons and could itself practice coercive nuclear diplomacy aggressively. For one thing, it has been said that:

...the Soviet ICBM force is not optimized for an attack on U.S. land-based missile silos. Certainly one of the primary concerns of the Strategic Missile Troops is effective counter battery fire--aimed at the Minuteman and Titan force. But if the force were optimized for their destruction, one might instead see a larger number of mid-megaton range single warhead missile launchers rather than the force that is in being today. Nevertheless, where some sixty percent of the ICBM force in the early 1970s could have been targeted on the U.S. land-based force only some thirty percent, due to MIRVing, are likely to be, in the early 1980s. The rest of the force has other responsibilities, that if properly met, would figure as heavily in the security of the Soviet Union as counter silo attacks.

...the targeting priorities of the S.M.T. have never, nor are they likely to be, centered singularly on counter silo kills. The total force value of the Soviet ICBM force against an extreme target set, either 90 percent hard targets or 90 percent soft targets, shows a greater potential against soft targets than hard targets. When a balanced and changing

target set is presented Soviet ICBM effectiveness still leans heavily toward softer, more numerous aim points. Total Soviet ICBM force value thus seems more in line with producing flexible targeting assignments...By striking only at missile silos, the Soviet planner creates constraints in using the ICBM force to its maximum value.

In a denial posture, as the Soviets have developed it, the more drawn out these operations are, the less effective the S.M.T. becomes. If, for instance, the S.M.T. would either mirror U.S. punishment doctrine by threatening or executing limited nuclear options (LNOs) against the U.S. in a crisis, or attempt to strike only the Minuteman/Titan force and withhold the remainder of its force for intra-war bargaining, then much of the "denial essence" of the S.M.T. would be offset by the wide range of counter actions available to the U.S. The reason the S.M.T. is not optimized for counter silo attack or LNOs is because that approach where ICBM attrition and exchange rates come into play, creates the greatest insecurity for the Soviet state. It allows the U.S. to bring to bear its nuclear forces. By this, "denial" begins to fade as an operative doctrine. 3/

And too, there is the following perspective:

For all the sophisticated technology involved, this is still a world of human beings and of military organizations with all the complication and imperfection that entails. The attack envisaged in the standard calculations requires at least 2,000 individual warheads and at least 200 missile launchers, under the currently projected configuration of the Soviet forces. If the attacking weapons are to avoid destroying each other instead of their intended targets, their timing must be very closely coordinated and the accuracies planned must be achieved to a very close approximation. This must be done, moreover, not under the special conditions which, for safety's sake, apply to missile test ranges, but under the heat of crisis or even in the midst of a lesser war. A large number of missiles which would have been sitting in silos for extended periods of time and which would be operated by frightened and confused people would have to fire within seconds of their set plans. They would have to

fly accurately to targets over routes that had not been flown before; their warheads must actually explode at the end of the flight though that also would never have been done before. The entire intricate sequence must work to near perfection the first time it is attempted, and, if it should not, the attack could fall well short of its objectives with disaster for the attacker as the probable consequence.

In the practical world there are a great many things that can go wrong with such a scheme, most of them peculiar, detailed, unsystematic things that cannot be precisely anticipated or calculated. It is the great profusion of these small, practical things -- the skeptical, reluctant missile launch officer; the communications link which fails; the thunderstorm over a missile base; the unforeseen re-entry effect on live warheads, etc., etc., etc. -- which invalidate positive inferences drawn solely from the standard calculations.

Even cursory examination is enough to plant serious doubt that military planners on the Soviet side would actually attempt the attack implied. 4 /

Insofar as these questions are ones of technical uncertainty, a new generation of more technocratically oriented Soviet political leaders may be more, not less, cautious about embracing a first strike threat scenario put forward by enthusiastic military men. They may be more comfortable with mathematical and statistical argument, but their questions may be more penetrating. Still, if they do receive answers which appear credible to them, they might indeed be emboldened in their statecraft, particularly if U.S. policymakers appear to perceive these arguments as accurate and consider the United States at a disadvantage--that is, if the perspective and "rationality" of a strategic imbalance favorable to the USSR are internalized by U.S. decisionmakers.

Not implausible as a result of a shift in perceptions according to the USSR some degree of strategic advantage is a greater general willingness of Soviet leaders to utilize conventional armed forces to defend friendly regimes and nations threatened by domestic or external opposition. In this strategic environment the psychological barrier to deploying ground or tactical air units probably would be lower and the Kremlin might airlift armaments in response to allied alarms sooner than it might otherwise. If the United States is not likely, in any case, to militarily respond to Soviet coercive activity aimed at preserving an existing order and advertising no new adversity for U.S. interests, it nevertheless is not in the interest of the United States that Soviet military units should unilaterally decide the outcome to unstable situations.

Much less reason exists to believe that the USSR would react militarily if U.S. policymakers ordered military action against a Soviet ally that was guilty of a violent or even political provocation directed at the United States or an American friend. The Soviet nuclear advantage over China in 1979 was enormous; yet Peking was allowed to enter and beat up on Vietnam for weeks without Moscow ordering anything more than a militarily weak naval presence, a small airlift and perhaps a partial alert of forces in Asia. Although China was careful to proscribe its action as limited and to be meant only as a "lesson" to Hanoi, the Kremlin doubtfully appreciated the invasion of an ally which only recently had signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation with the USSR. Possibly



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Moscow stood back as far as it did in order not to frighten the West, thereby threatening U.S. rejection of a SALT II agreement, higher Western defense expenditures and even closer relations between the West and China. Whatever the relative importance of these matters, it is difficult to believe the USSR was not concerned that strong action taken against China would risk major conventional conflict and, possibly, even a limited nuclear exchange. To go this far on behalf of an independent minded nation like Vietnam was almost certainly unacceptable in Moscow.

Would the Kremlin be more willing to militarily support incursions by allies into foreign territories or attempts to replace regimes unfriendly to the USSR? Here too the barrier probably would be lower to the extent the United States made clear an aversion to political-military diplomacy. However, if this posture was not struck and powerful U.S. conventional forces were able to be marshalled in a local theater of conflict, it is extremely likely that the Kremlin would hold back, both out of short and longer term considerations. For the utility of the forecast imbalance does not lie in the military option of attacking the U.S. land-based ICBM force, even with 90 percent certainty that the United States would not retaliate in kind against high-value Soviet targets, but in its prior deterrence of adverse U.S. behavior--that is, powerful U.S. conventional operations during crises. Very doubtfully would the Kremlin perceive an interest in escalating a third world crisis which promised only local change to a point when it might have to decide in

a conventional confrontation whether to back down or fire nuclear warheads at the United States.

As long as the matter of strategic imbalance remained in question in terms either of the technical plausibility of a successful first-strike or its political implications, Soviet leaders would be taking an extreme risk were they to attempt to coerce the United States explicitly, let alone order an actual nuclear attack. That they would do so on behalf of anything less than a security interest critical to the USSR does not seem plausible. The Soviet Union has not made territorial claims on European or Asian nations (besides a dispute over territorial waters with Norway) and the Soviet ethos does not suggest aggression--that is, unprovoked military action--to destroy nations, to seize territory, or to capture bodies for indoctrination. Irrespective of whether or not communist religion sanctions offensive war, communism in the Soviet Union is increasingly an ecclesiastic experience. Soviet leaders do want the USSR to be recognized as a great--and not just military--power and look forward to greater glory for their nation; but, even if it is argued that they are disposed to aggression, they do not laud the Soviet state enough spiritually or have so little regard for their society and historical achievements that they would risk without provocation a major attack upon, if not the utter destruction of, their country. In the longer term, to the extent the USSR explicitly attempted to capitalize on a perceived strategic advantage, but did not launch a first strike, it could probably look forward to a substantial U.S. strategic weapons buildup in response.

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Elsewhere it has been argued that "In the Berlin crisis of 1961 our theater position was clearly unfavorable; we relied entirely on our strategic superiority to face down Chairman Khrushchev's ultimatum. In the 1973 Middle East crisis the theater and the strategic nuclear balances were more balanced; both sides compromised." 5/ This is misleading. What compromise in 1973? The U.S. pressure upon Israel to finally observe the cease-fire? While this was the U.S. objective in any case, to the extent it was reinforced by Soviet military pressure, the concern was to ward off the emplacement into Egypt of Soviet ground forces. U.S. behavior was not taken in reaction to or in anticipation of a Soviet nuclear threat. The significance of Moscow's achievement of strategic parity was that the Kremlin was made more willing to threaten the use of its conventional capability on behalf of a severely endangered regime in longtime alliance with the USSR, whose homeland was invaded by a U.S. ally which possibly might have moved in the direction of Cairo.

As to Berlin, it is doubtful that Khrushchev would have gone much further than he did in 1961 in a climate of strategic parity or even the one of "disadvantage" forecast for the 1980's. If the U.S. nuclear umbrella had been unilaterally withdrawn, a more threatening ultimatum might well have been delivered or stronger conventional demonstrations might have been orchestrated. Such political use of force by the USSR is also conceivable had the United States not retrenched from its declaratory policy of responding to a Soviet conventional attack in Europe

with nuclear weapons if NATO conventional arms proved inadequate in combat. Thus, the Kremlin might have been more likely to draw closer to the brink of conflict. However, to resort to even limited violence, particularly as long as U.S. declaratory policy remained unchanged, would have required the acceptance of an enormous risk. The key to Soviet probing and risk-taking then, now, and in the future would seem to be Moscow's perception of the perspective held by U.S. decisionmakers. Rational U.S. policymakers will not stick their heads in the sand and simply refuse to accept what everyone else in the world believes with strong reason, but they also may not accept the validity of a highly contentious thesis and acknowledge U.S. weakness. Perceiving U.S. governmental rejection of this view, prudent and uncertain Soviet leaders are not likely to precipitate a crisis on this basis. In the circumstance of parity or uncertain Soviet strategic edge, Khrushchev probably would have followed a strategy similar to the one pursued by his successors a decade and two decades later: that is, attempt to weaken ties between the Federal Republic and United States and achieve West German accommodation by a combination of intimidation based on a posture of military strength and the inducement of good cooperative relations including the provision of some hope about the future relations between the two Germanys. To provoke a crisis in which West Germany and its allies were very seriously threatened with nuclear attack or a conventional conflict that could escalate to the nuclear level in order to force a change in Bonn's overall foreign and

defense policy posture required the acceptance of an exceedingly dangerous and questionable course.

#### Conditions and Places of Future Activity

The political use of Soviet military units in the future is unlikely to come as a sudden surprise. If Moscow's past behavior is any guide, the United States need not fear the appearance of Soviet armed forces in an otherwise quiescent setting and, thereupon, Moscow's use of heavy military pressure to obtain an advantage on behalf of an ally or itself directly. Soviet political-military operations have not occurred as a bolt out of the blue, but have been mounted in response to instabilities well-known to Western foreign policy directors and certainly their intelligence services. Soviet military interventions in the past usually were expected or were plausible, as based on the observation of an endangered Soviet ally or other interest or the recognition of an opportunity for easy entry into a situation of on-going violence. Rather than an exclamation of surprise--as in, "they what?", analysts and policymakers need to separate from the larger number of possibilities the relatively few instances when the USSR is most likely to resort to the military and to determine the specific character of those prospective interventions. Serious coercive military operations orchestrated by the Kremlin may be forecast to occur only in response to major interstate and civil conflicts--that is, situations to which the United States will ordinarily be greatly

attentive. In these incidents, the real issue will be not how to avert shock or even surprise, but how to either preclude Soviet intervention or respond to it most sensibly.

The following is not a forecast of discrete Soviet political-military operations in the future, but a summary of political developments in response to which the USSR would be especially likely to engage in coercive diplomacy. Those more doubtful circumstances are considered from a perspective that they would be of vast global significance if they did occur, they are not inconceivable, and they would seem to be matters of continuing concern to Soviet leaders.

#### Soviet Security in the West

Perhaps the most conceivable--if still, unlikely--manifestation of Soviet military power en masse in the west is a drive against West Germany following a development of extreme nationalism in the GFR or a breakdown in democracy where factions favored by the USSR were not the beneficiary. Sufferings of the Great Patriotic War are still remembered in the USSR and Soviet citizens are attentive to reports of neo-Nazi activities, West German rocket testing in Zaire, and any sign of militarism in the Federal Republic. The occurrence of a radical shift to the right in the GFR would create enormous anxiety among Soviet citizens as well as among Eastern and also Western Europeans.

Three and a half decades after the demise of Adolph Hitler, Europeans are hopeful about the strength of West Germany's socio-political fabric. "Objective" measures of economic performance and participatory democracy and, too, the quality of parliamentary government in Bonn lead to a conclusion that the prospect is great for continued regime stability in West Germany. Still, the non-developmental establishment of German democracy and the absence of national social roots cause Germans and their neighbors caution and suspicion that the Federal Republic's institutions are thin-shelled.<sup>6/</sup> The experiences of the first half of the twentieth century have made the threshold for strong confidence exceptionally high, while adverse developments tend to take on heightened meaning. If West Germans were forced to face economic difficulties or seriously doubted U.S. leadership on major global issues or NATO's ability to deter Soviet military attack and hostile political initiatives directed against the GFR, many worry that Bonn would elect or be pressured to adopt an independent political course.

One possibility is that the Federal Republic might seek the neutralization of Central Europe including the GFR and GDR. Another direction, and one that could be taken in the wake of a failure to persuade the USSR to lessen its presence in East Germany, might be to adopt an increasingly less conciliatory posture over issues of difference with Western and Bloc nations and to seek an independent role in international affairs. This, increased budgetary emphasis on defense, and any development of doubt about Bonn's willingness to abide by the Nuclear

Nonproliferation Treaty, to which the Federal Republic is a signatory, would kindle substantial fear among Europeans who might quickly draw out of their closet of memories recollections of the First and Second World Wars. In the current European military environment confident Soviet military commanders might obtain an audience among concerned political leaders receptive to a plan calling, for example, for the rapid occupation of some portion of northern West Germany, perhaps the Duisberg-Dortmund-Bonn triangle, in a time span and by means sensitive to avoiding NATO's use of tactical nuclear weapons and even major involvement by U.S. ground forces.<sup>7/</sup> In a climate of growing general concern about the future behavior of West Germany, Bonn's NATO allies might be less prepared to risk their own territorial security by quickly joining in the defense of the Federal Republic, while GFR forces alone were inadequate to the task. Achieving its limited military objectives, Moscow might then, or even earlier, call for a cease-fire and negotiations aimed at the restructuring of the Federal Republic's political system to exclude unacceptable groups and the demilitarization and neutralization of West Germany.

Prior to any military action and, indeed, to avoid it, Moscow would probably attempt to obtain its objectives by the demonstrative use of Soviet armed forces--that is, by deploying more forces into East Germany and having those units mass or exercise near the West German border. Soviet behavior in this instance might be somewhat analogous to that in response to developments in Czechoslovakia prior to the actual intervention in 1968. Not in control of West



Germany, Soviet leaders might be expected to seek negotiations with Bonn to dissuade the Federal Republic against particular actions and to seek guarantees that certain behavior would not be pursued. Failure of discussion and cautious verbal warnings might give way to stronger statements and shows of force of increased magnitude insofar as Moscow probably would wish to use the least amount of coercion necessary to achieve minimal goals rather than engage, at any early stage, when the degree of change in store was less apparent, in a massive and fearsome demonstration of Soviet military power, let alone invasion of West Germany. Rather than occur suddenly, very threatening actions and finally, perhaps, invasion would be more likely to follow the failure of negotiation and lesser demonstrations.

The preclusion of Soviet and other European insecurity about West Germany is perhaps best assured by 1) a Soviet posture not threatening to the Federal Republic and allowing communications between the two Germanys; 2) sustained Western interest to insure an economically strong GFR; and 3) continued reinforcement of the institutions of West German democracy. The triumph of German democracy may include, at some point, toleration of a political viewpoint particularly hateful of the USSR commanding a worrisome popular following. Insofar as this does not lead to aggressive governmental behavior by Bonn, the United States must appear especially prepared to honor its NATO commitments so as to cause Soviet policymakers pause to hasty and probably counterproductive coercive diplomacy.

Not so momentous in significance, but more likely in occurrence and, too, a prospective cause of Soviet political-military operations, are certain paths that might be taken by Finland, Norway, and Yugoslavia.

Sharing a border less than one hundred miles from Leningrad, and again with the experience of the Second World War in mind, the Kremlin has insisted that Finland maintain considerable distance from the West and be particularly accommodating to Soviet interests. Soviet security concerns would almost certainly dictate some demonstration, if not intervention, against Finland in the event that anti-Russian sentiments were manifested overtly by Helsinki and neutrality and "Finlandization" were explicitly rejected. In the postwar period, Helsinki has cautiously attempted to "de-Finlandize" its relationship with the USSR; not to align itself with the West, but to reduce Moscow's expectations and to obtain a situation of substantively recognized and respected neutrality. Finland hosts a vibrant democratic political system, an economy based on free enterprise and including firm trade ties with the West, and is also a member of the Nordic Council and an often leading member in the United Nations.

For the USSR, the problem has been to delimit Finnish independence and to insure a critical attentiveness in Helsinki to Soviet interests and predispositions. Thus during a visit to Helsinki in 1978 Soviet Defense Minister Ustinov raised for consideration the subject of joint Soviet-Finnish military maneuvers, and shortly before Finland's elections in 1979 Moscow attempted to coerce Finnish voters and the composition of a new government.<sup>8/</sup>

Hence one Pravda story told readers that "many prominent political and public figures are returning again and again to the significance for Finland of fruitful cooperation with the neighboring Soviet state"; and another article, after demanding that "the Finnish Government should be friendly toward the Soviet Union," went on to say that "it is no accident therefore that the local progressive public is bewildered by reports that have appeared in the Finnish press to the effect that certain circles in the current government coalition parties are beginning to talk about the possibility of post-election cooperation with the National Coalition Party" (the conservatives). 9/ The call for joint exercises was denied politely but firmly, while Soviet pre-election statements may have been important to the victory of a record number of conservatives--that is, a substantial number of Finns may have voted as they did in protest to Soviet pressure.10/ (Doubtfully did a smaller number of Finns vote for conservatives in positive response to the Soviet commentary.) There is a point in this type of behavior beyond which the Kremlin would probably conclude that some special flexing of Soviet military muscle was necessary to remind Finland that its mighty neighbor's tolerance is limited and that the USSR can not be toyed with.

Further north, the USSR retains a strong interest in assuring its Northern Fleet clear access into and through the Barents Sea and in gaining continental shelf resources. To obtain greater confidence and control over their interests in the north in the 1970s, the Kremlin resorted to a number of politically aggressive stratagems. Powerful military forces were deployed and otherwise earmarked for the northern theater, direct challenges were posed to Oslo's authority in Svalbard and

in waters off the north coast of Norway, norms of "innocent passage" in Norwegian waters were violated, and aggressive surveillance activities were conducted by both Soviet aircraft and ships. In 1978 a TU-126 AWACS (airborne warning and control system) aircraft crashed near an island of the Spitzbergen group, leading to a massive Soviet air and sea search effort that was joined by U.S., British, and Norwegian military search actions. One writer has argued that "the stage was set for a . . . mini-crisis." 11/ Norway, for its part, has sought to steer a middle course of maintaining strong relations with NATO, while not allowing its allies a presence in those areas about which the Kremlin has been exceptionally sensitive; and if sometimes Oslo has responded firmly to Soviet initiatives, it has attempted to persuade Moscow of its geographic and economic claims and often looked the other way in the face of subtle Soviet tactics.

Moscow will probably see continued merit in efforts aimed at weakening Norwegian sovereignty over the Svalbard archipelago and pressuring Oslo to accommodate Soviet economic objectives. At the same time, the Kremlin will undoubtedly expect Norway to continue to keep its NATO allies out of certain sensitive geographic areas economically and militarily. Quite conceivably the lengths to which Oslo is prepared to go will not be enough for Soviet leaders; and, at some point, the latter will resort to discrete political-military operations to either deter or compel some Norwegian action. Or, continued Soviet pressures or behavior insensitive to Norwegian sovereignty and claims might cause Oslo to draw closer to NATO militarily and, to warn Moscow off, allow some foreign presence into an area hitherto put off limits. In short, the possibility exists for both aggressive Soviet tactics taken as part of a calculated diplomatic

offensive or a cycle of deterioration in Soviet-Norwegian relations including Soviet military demonstrations taken defensively; the first, of course, being a potential catalyst to the second. Perceiving signs of a toughening Norwegian position in 1979, Moscow issued the following warning to Oslo:

The operation of the AWACS system in Norwegian airspace, the use of Norwegian airfields to service NATO air force planes and the siting of foreign electronic reconnaissance stations on Norwegian territory cannot be regarded other than as a buildup of U.S. and NATO activities in that region--a buildup which may have serious consequences. . . .

All this cannot fail to cause the Soviet side legitimate concern. One cannot help wondering: Do these plans and actions accord with the proclaimed official Norwegian policy of not siting foreign bases on national territory in peacetime. 12/

The USSR retains a powerful interest in Yugoslavia for numerous reasons, including: concern that Belgrade might at some time slip from nonalignment into closer political and even security cooperation with the West, the example of national communism to Eastern European nations, the continued sense of "loss" that a nonaligned Yugoslavia represents, and Yugoslavia's geostrategic position as a bridge to the central Mediterranean. Although President Tito has steered a careful middle course between East and West, he has at different times also leaned more closely toward or away from the USSR, leading in the latter instances to a deterioration in relations with Moscow and an increased disposition in the Kremlin to exert pressure upon Belgrade both to bound Yugoslav independence and to cause Tito to become more sensitive to Soviet interests and positions.

As in the past, drawing closer to the United States or into apparent alliance with China and the United States as a result of symbolic actions or agreement on a range of issues will raise the prospect of Soviet political-military coercion in the form of new Soviet deployments into Hungary and special redeployments and exercises there. Hostile naval activities in the Adriatic also are possible, but less likely insofar as the Soviet navy would probably want to avoid prejudicing its usage of Yugoslav facilities. Such naval actions would also risk attracting a countervailing Sixth Fleet presence. A larger question, though, is how the USSR will react to the loss of President Tito and worrisome developments in Yugoslavia thereafter.

Surely if Tito's successors seek to abandon Marxism-Leninism or take an anti-Soviet stance, the Kremlin will react vigorously and at least contemplate military pressures, even if the maintenance of political unity in Belgrade and Yugoslavia's continued readiness to simultaneously engage in drawn out regular and irregular warfare--that is, people's defense--proved a powerful deterrent to actual military intervention. Almost as certain is the unlikelihood of Moscow's responding to President Tito's passing by mechanically engaging in coercive activities designed to bring Yugoslavia back into the bloc. Probably the Kremlin will watch to see if those who assume leadership in Belgrade show signs of changing course by their policies and if stability is being maintained. As long as Soviet leaders lack certainty that the post-Tito political constellation in Belgrade will be weak, noncommunist, or depart from neutrality, and believe Yugoslavia will be defended resolutely, they are likely to wait upon developments. If those Yugoslav institutions

established earlier to provide a new basis for stability prove too weak and the nation's political system and uncertain social unity begin to crumble, Moscow, no doubt, will become uneasy, while, as Adam Roberts has remarked, "if those foundations fail, the idea of General People's Defence might be quickly forgotten; or, worse, it might be perversely misused for civil war."<sup>13</sup> Add to severe instability and a defense system in disrepair a call by a major domestic faction in Yugoslavia for Soviet support and the threshold to Soviet coercive diplomacy and at least limited military intervention appears markedly lower. In this sense the question is not so much how the USSR will behave toward Yugoslavia after Tito, but how Yugoslavs will behave toward each other.

#### Authority and Security in Eastern Europe

Past behavior, continuing Soviet security interests and internalization of the Brezhnev doctrine suggest military diplomacy to be an essential form of reaction to political change in a Warsaw Pact nation threatening an end to Marxism-Leninism or its solidarity with the USSR. Perhaps the most prospective candidates for hard glances by Moscow are Poland and Rumania.

Devotedly authoritarian, the Ceausescu regime nevertheless has gradually staked out a substantially independent foreign policy posture. Bucharest also has disallowed multinational-WTO combat exercises on Rumanian soil, refused Red Army formations passage through Rumania to Bulgaria and gone its own way in determining the size of its defense budget. Moscow has not responded nonchalantly to this heterodoxy. The Rumanians have been pushed hard politically and on a number of occasions

have been subjected to military coercion. The latter is not an improbable response to new free-spirited actions by Bucharest as it attempts to wend its way to a position of substantive, if not formal, neutrality.

Soviet political-military diplomacy is even more likely if Bucharest adopts liberalization measures soon (an unlikely prospect) or if the nuance of its foreign policy shifts from respectful independence to anti-Sovietism. Soviet attitudes toward Rumania also may be importantly influenced by the course of developments in Yugoslavia. Concern that intervention in Rumania might end in conflict with Yugoslavia and fighting with the West is perhaps an essential deterrent to the first; indeed, Rumanian security may be based not so much on Bucharest's avowed intent to bitterly resist intervention and to do so at length, but by its feared role of detonator. If this is true, then, unlike the posture of the West toward Soviet domain in other Eastern European nations, coercive U.S. military diplomacy may be quite appropriate as a means to counter threatened Soviet intervention in Rumania; not by threatening to support Rumanian resistance, but by standing firmly by Yugoslavia--a neutral nation--to which Moscow might fear the conflict would spread. On the other hand, accommodation by Yugoslavia to the USSR or a period of weak leadership in Belgrade might be profoundly dangerous for Rumania.

If the Kremlin does entertain the idea of intervention in Rumania more seriously, it probably will be more disposed also to the demonstrative use of force. For if serious military action against Rumania is considered a potentially necessary response to intransigence by Bucharest, Moscow probably would be attitudinally more open to the coercive use of



the military as a cheaper means of achieving its objectives; although if the Kremlin was to consider how often its political-military diplomacy in Eastern Europe has failed, it might determine that what was most sensible was to skip this phase as one of wishful thinking and warning and act with sudden violence; its real choice, in effect, being all or nothing. This is not an easy lesson to accept, however. In any new crisis, Soviet leaders are likely to feel strongly that lesser measures should be tried first. With this in mind, the means of avoiding Soviet coercive diplomacy as well as intervention are to alert the USSR to the futility of these exercises and present a serious set of deterrents to aggression. Some might think of Soviet political-military demonstrations as a healthy way for Moscow to be able to let off some steam. To a degree this may be correct; but there also is the risk that the Kremlin could go down this road too far and not see its way to withdrawal from that course.

The degree of openness in Hungary is now of long standing and Czechoslovakia and East Germany are under the firm control of regimes that seem to give no serious thought to an independent course. Internal developments in recent years in Poland, however, suggest an important change in the character of regime authority. To a large private agricultural system, a thriving Catholic Church and free practice of religion, and substantial toleration of local strikes and other forms of economic protest, further important dimensions of freedom are now apparent: While the regime-run press and cultural productions have become extraordinarily frank in their political statements, parallel

structures--for example, self-published (samizdat) presses, private performances and lectures, and "flying universities"--have begun to flourish openly in the sense that the individuals involved and their places of activity are not secret to the state. And too, there are the formation of peasant self-defense committees and a new outspokenness by the Church which has sought with vigor not just to end censorship of its own activities, but also for media coverage of mass and sermons.

Meanwhile, when the regime in Warsaw has met public resistance to new initiatives, its response has been to back off quickly and to be conciliatory--for example, the rescinding of meat price increases and backing down on a call-up of seminarists for military duty immediately after the election of a Polish cardinal as Pope; while to obtain balance-of-payments support from Western banks, Warsaw consented to their monitoring the Polish economy. In short, rather than appearing to exercise tight Marxist-Leninist rule over Poland, to the extent this was restored by Wladyslaw Gomulka after 1956, Edward Gierek's government has seemed immobile and drifting toward a Kadar-like end-point--that is, to one of liberty without majoritarianism, where the state is responsive to the USSR in foreign affairs but otherwise acts as an intermediary between Polish society and the Kremlin. To the widely recognized potential for civil unrest in response to food shortages and price increases is now added a growing possibility of stiff resistance to an attempt to turn back the clock politically, insofar as independent groups have become more institutionalized and larger numbers of people have entered into their activities and become used to a new normality.

Without question would the USSR act to back up Polish governmental action taken in response to revolt over economic matters or large-scale public protest seeking political change. Yet, it is also possible that the regime in Poland will be subjected to strong pressures by Moscow to reverse the political change that has taken place and return to socialist orthodoxy, or at least to not allow further developments that might be in store. For although Soviet leaders might perceive the change going on as delimited and the existence of a continued basis for strong relations with Poland, they might fear developments in Poland as an example to other Eastern European countries, particularly East Germany and Czechoslovakia. Moscow also might want to see screws tightened politically and lessened Polish economic relations with the West in the event of any return to cold war-like hostility and related new ideological evangelism.

If Moscow was to become sharply intolerant and be resisted firmly by Warsaw, the stage would be set for a crisis that could include Soviet military demonstrations and Brezhnev doctrine-based threats of intervention. A united Poland prepared to fight would present a formidable deterrent in terms of the clear consequences and dangers of conflict, notwithstanding a prospect of USSR "victory." However, what is more likely is that the factionalized but internally balanced Polish United Workers Party and its leader would seek to establish that current point in Poland's progression as a middle ground, which should be accepted by Poles and the Kremlin; the thought being that to go back--or at least to go back very far--would risk revolt, while to go further would mean serious confrontation with the USSR. Suffice it to say that the Red

Army would be made alert and probably redeployed in response to any uncontrolled public revolt; although intervention might be deterred by governmental and armed forces unity behind the cause of that protest coupled with the termination of its manifestation in the streets.

A threat by the United States to intervene in an Eastern European crisis in response to possible military action by the USSR would risk large-scale conventional, if not nuclear, conflict between the superpowers--in effect, World War III. Serious readiness measures by NATO meant only as a bluff risk preemptive Warsaw Pact action. Taken on behalf of changing the status quo in Europe, this danger remains unacceptable to American policymakers. Moreover, U.S. diplomatic behavior supportive of dissidence in Eastern Europe only increases Moscow's anxiety about such political change and probably disposes Soviet leaders more favorably toward the use of force. On the other hand, to the extent Soviet leaders are at all concerned about Red Army intervention in Eastern Europe prompting a Western military response, clear signals of noninvolvement by NATO may eliminate a counterargument to intervention in the Kremlin. What might be done with least risk and to possibly good effect by the West during an Eastern European crisis in which Moscow is undecided about intervention is to show signs--but not give clear signals--of responding by some substantial reinforcement of NATO forces in Western Europe, increased defense spending generally, strengthened relations with China, and a hardening line in negotiations--all of which would not come to pass if the USSR continued to act in a restrained manner. Clear signals not

only might be exposed later as having been a bluff, but might lead Soviet leaders feeling their backs against a wall to overreact.

A potential path toward loosening Soviet dominion over Eastern Europe, either to be set out upon consciously or realized upon its completion, is one that is staged and directed by a united leadership commanding popular support in a domestic environment including inhibition against disorder and overt anti-sovietism. Evolution over years, not days, weeks or even months would seem not merely prudent, but essential to keeping the Kremlin off balance and at bay. In the first stage firm Marxist-Leninist theocracy and retention of alliance with the USSR might be coupled with domestic economic or foreign policy deviation. Entering a second dimension, independence in the other side of affairs, be it economic or foreign policy, might become the order of the day. And thirdly, by deliberate, slow-paced salami tactics a liberation in defense orientation might be sought in terms of gaining freedom in national defense spending, imposing constrictions upon joint military activities and constraining the freedom of in-country Soviet garrison forces. Unlike in Rumania and Bulgaria, Red Army divisions continue to be deployed in Poland (two), Hungary (four), Czechoslovakia (five), and East Germany (thirty-one). Mutual force reductions of U.S. and Soviet military units in Western and Eastern Europe, respectively, could prove of immense value to this third dimension as well as lubricate progress toward policy emancipation and substantive nonalignment of the sort enjoyed by Finland, Yugoslavia, and increasingly by Rumania.

At some point a new status quo might be appreciated whereupon a new leadership orientation disposed toward cautious liberalization might be

afforded. Such authorities might succeed that generation currently in power in Rumania--assuming that Mr. Ceausescu himself does not eventually take steps in this direction. In any case, liberalization probably will not include the creation of Finnish-style multiparty democracy, but only the increased toleration of dissent and wedging of democratic processes into state institutions and communist party organization and decisionmaking. Orderly change in one nation--especially a key country such as Poland--would create a foundation for positive developments in neighboring nations.

Doubtless, this odyssey by any Warsaw Pact state would include times of Kremlin consideration of coercive diplomacy and perhaps even outright intervention. To gradualism and the avoidance of shocks to Moscow and Soviet concern about the negative international repercussions of intervention, the Eastern European capital in question must add a sincere intent to defend national sovereignty and honor. Those who favor policies desired by the Kremlin must be isolated and not tolerated as a fifth column; and at some point Soviet decisionmakers must be put on notice that intervention will be resisted violently, at length, conventionally and then unconventionally (including massive civil disobedience). Practical preparations to make resubjugation hostage to war and the necessity of occupation, undertaken slowly and methodically, can credibly supplement rhetoric. The object is not to make a Soviet victory pyrrhic, but to keep Soviet leaders calculating that the slow change occurring is containable and, in any case, not dangerous enough to warrant the cost of resorting to the military. If the progression is carried out with foreknowledge, then, as in "The

Sting," the script must insure against the Kremlin perceiving that it has been had. Rather Soviet leaders must be kept believing that their restrained behavior represents a sensible adaptation to changing times and offers the best longterm protection of Soviet interests, as indeed it might.

#### Southwest Asia

In southwestern Asia the security position of the USSR is improved as compared with that in earlier years: The regime of Nur Mohammed Taraki currently in power in Afghanistan appears dependent upon the USSR and heavily influenced by Moscow, in contrast to the more neutral posture of the preceding Mohammed Daud autocracy; the Shah has been overthrown and replaced by a deeply nationalist leadership that has ended Iran's special relationship with the United States and adopted a position of nonalignment in international affairs; and, in Turkey, the issue of Cyprus and enormous economic difficulties have caused successive governments in Ankara to make Turkish defense and foreign policy hostage to support obtained from its NATO allies, particularly the United States. Each of these developments has included the prospect of continued domestic instability.

In 1979 Soviet military advisers and perhaps pilots played an important role in the civil war in Afghanistan. Continued participation and an even more substantial role for Soviet armed forces as a political and military instrument is not unforeseeable. If its initial military investment was to fail, the Kremlin might elect to end or sharply delimit this form of support out of concern to avoid a political morass.

On the other hand, having gained a very special position in Kabul and strongly identified itself with one side in the conflict, Moscow might not wish to entertain the possibility of a hostile regime gaining power in this neighboring nation. Moreover, if U.S. relations with Pakistan were to remain poor and the United States was counted upon to not escalate its interest in the rebel forces operating against the regime in Kabul, the Kremlin might go quite far in bolstering the Taraki government, including tactical air support and perhaps even garrisoning Red Army units in Afghanistan to free a greater number of government troops for fighting.

Questions about the stability of the current regime in Iran and its policies will probably exist for some time. The muddle of Iranian politics and foreign policy direction in the 1940s and early 1950s may be repeated. Soviet leaders will remain concerned to insure that Moslems in neighboring Soviet republics are not badly influenced, that Iran does not again align itself with the United States, and that U.S. armed forces are not used to influence developments in Iran. Toward these ends in 1978 General Secretary Brezhnev warned that U.S. "interference, especially military, in the affairs of Iran--a state directly bordering on the Soviet Union would be regarded by the USSR as a matter affecting its security interests."<sup>14</sup>/ As occurred three decades ago, Moscow might respond to newly hostile political developments in Iran or fear of new U.S. political penetration of Teheran by strengthening its forces in bordering areas, mounting military exercises, ordering violations of Iranian airspace and so forth. A potential catalyst to this behavior is the drawing of sharp lines and confrontation between domestic groups of varying political persuasions in Iran in circumstances in which the



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Kremlin feared the demise of forces favorable to the USSR. The possibility also can not be discounted, though, of some Soviet political-military operation in support of an attempt to seize power by factions favorably disposed to Moscow.

Somewhat analogous to the Soviet geographic situation vis-à-vis Norway, the USSR is also interested to erode Ankara's control over passage between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean and certain Turkish airspace. Here too the tactics include faits accomplis and ambiguous military behavior. Ankara's poor relations with its Western allies as combined with substantial Soviet economic and political support with the USSR in the 1970s were enough to ward off Turkish interest in confrontation. Indeed, these other developments have afforded Moscow considerable hope of weaning Turkey from NATO and of avoiding any necessity to confront Ankara with military threats. The deployment of Red Army units into the Georgian and Armenian Republics in the event of instability in eastern Turkey would likely be to insure Soviet domestic security, not to intimidate Ankara.

If Turkey becomes further isolated from the United States and Europe while Greece enters the European Economic Community, and a new crisis then erupts between Greece and Turkey, Moscow could support Ankara by redeploying warships in the Mediterranean, by having Bulgarian ground units demonstrate near the Greek border, or even by alerting airborne units. A decision by Moscow not to support Turkey militarily in a new Greek-Turkish crisis would probably result from a calculus

that this action would drive Greece back toward NATO and cause unwanted suspicion and hostility in Europe and the United States. If the USSR stood aside, Soviet leaders might calculate, both Turkey and Greece might be dissatisfied by their allies' behavior in the crisis and NATO would become weaker still, while blame was not placed on the USSR. Given the non-risk--"it will fall in our lap"--strength of this argument, it would seem the one most likely to prevail.

#### China and Japan

A partial rapprochement between the USSR and China is not implausible and Soviet-Japanese relations probably will run a course of ups and downs during the next decade. On the whole, however, Soviet security concerns in the Far East are likely to heighten further as these two great neighbors become more competent militarily and particularly if they pursue closer relations with one another.

The multiple origins of Sino-Soviet discord that were vented in the late nineteen fifties, the harsh polemics in the early and mid-nineteen sixties, and the serious border clashes and consequent buildup of opposing forces in the following decade have led, three decades after Stalin and Mao signed a treaty of friendship and mutual defense, to a climate of pervasive mutual fear and hostility between the USSR and China. Unwilling to deal with Moscow from a position of military inferiority, Peking grasped a strategy including the gradual acquisition of more capable armed forces and formation of reinforcing

alliances against the USSR. China's unyielding hostility, coupled with its unwillingness to accept the legitimacy of treaties establishing Sino-Soviet borders, the growth of its military capabilities, and its stupendous population, in turn, have generated in the Soviet Union a grave and pervasive sense of long-term danger. While Peking has feared Soviet military capabilities and insisted on at least a partial Soviet military withdrawal from border areas, Moscow has perceived its increased nuclear and conventional military power justified on the basis of past Sino-Soviet violence and confrontation, and as a critical deterrent to newly antagonistic behavior by China.

China has not been increasing the proportion of its gross national product spent on defense, but that percentage is running at about ten percent. To this, moreover, deserves to be added the following comment:

The National Defence, Scientific and Technological Commission of China would like to see the defence budget increased, principally for the development and deployment of modern weapons, and there has been much talk of buying technologically advanced weapons in Europe and Japan. This suggests that defence expenditure will be significantly increased, but probably not before the 1980s. 15,

Gradual qualitative improvement in Chinese conventional forces and acquisition of increased numbers of strategic nuclear weapons will not provide Peking a means for successful aggression against the USSR, but Chinese military forces are capable of being strengthened enough relative to Soviet armed forces in not too great a time for Peking to soon command a substantially reinforced deterrent to Soviet attack. Hypothetically, Moscow could order a preemptive action to terminate

the expanding Chinese nuclear threat to the USSR; yet the risks and repercussions of this are so great that it is unimaginable as long as Peking does not seriously threaten a military attack upon the Soviet Union. If strategic and conventional war against China declines as a credible option in consequence to increased Chinese military capabilities, a decline also might be perceived in the utility and hence sensibility of Moscow's resorting to the demonstrative use of force--including territorial incursions and limited violence directed at Chinese military units; which is not to say that these activities may not be turned to as a means of obtaining domestic or international cover in place of an effective option for coercing Chinese behavior.

Soviet military restraint and absence of serious coercive activities in response to China's 1979 intervention in Vietnam may be explained by a number of factors. Not insignificant among them, perhaps, was China's already improved strategic capability and the increased military risk that Moscow would have had to accept in resorting to serious action against Peking. Strong demonstrative action, meanwhile, risked political failure as well as Sino-Soviet military conflict. In addition to their finding Chinese armed forces increasingly credible and the coercion of China simply more difficult as well as dangerous, Soviet leaders also might conclude that political-military operations directed at China have worked to reinforce Peking's defense efforts and intent to form alliances directed at the USSR and have not deterred these activities or made their success less likely.

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Still, for a long time to come, the Kremlin may be expected to give intermittent consideration to coercive diplomacy against China in response to the accentuation of hostile verbal behavior by Peking, improved Chinese military capabilities, symbolic and substantive actions to form alliances against the USSR, and flash points of rivalry in the third world. Probably in mind most usually in Moscow will be the establishment of a naval presence or exercises by elements of the Soviet Pacific Fleet and Red Army and air deployments and maneuvers in the Soviet Far East. Up the ladder, on the occasion of more serious differences, are overflights and territorial infringements by ground units and attacks upon small Chinese military units. Serious crises may be expected to bring forth options including the decimation of a somewhat larger Chinese force, the seizure of some territory, and preemptive strategic attack. Although Soviet leaders may be increasingly expected to discount thoughts about preemptive strategic attack and nuclear threats as a result of increased Chinese strategic capabilities, and begin to think less about territorial intrusions as Chinese conventional capabilities improve, at least in the next half decade, Peking will have to temper a posture of bellicose anti-Sovietism with exceptionally careful tactics.

In the absence of a massive defense effort that would reduce the military imbalance more quickly, Chinese military leaders might call for at least a partial improvement in relations with the Soviet Union. The more likely prospect, though, is that Chinese political leaders will warm to this thought only upon their gradual acquisition

of military strength. Until then, they will probably be concerned to politically compensate for their military weakness by diplomacy and by making Soviet leaders believe that attempts to push China around risk escalation to a level which the Kremlin finds unacceptable--as coupled with a great deal of prudence by Peking. Hence it will remain difficult for Moscow to conciliate Peking and to avoid thoughts of political-military diplomacy. Decline in this Soviet orientation will probably result from a cumulation of increased Chinese military capability, decreased Chinese hostility to the USSR, and reorientation in Peking toward plying the space between the Soviet Union and the United States as a means of inducing more favorable behavior from both superpowers.

It is debatable whether or not heatedly conflictive relations between the USSR and China benefit U.S. interests. Whatever the case, though, the United States can do little to avert discrete Soviet political-military operations aimed at China, barring a course that would wreak severe damage upon Soviet-American relations and endanger the security of the United States. A path of cautioning Moscow, which means alliance with China and arms sales to Peking, may be justified as part of a reaction to Soviet behavior but does not recommend itself as a preemptive tactic to Soviet coercive diplomacy directed at Peking per se. U.S. policymakers will want to be extremely wary against giving Peking reason for new incautious behavior directed at the USSR and aimed indirectly at further reinforcing U.S. support for China. A single brief naval visit to a Chinese port can symbolize friendship; but repeated warship appearances, let alone joint

maneuvers or visits by U.S. combat aircraft, might well reinforce conflictive dynamics between the USSR and both China and the United States.

Japan too has been made anxious by the increased military power of the USSR. At the same time, Tokyo has suffered doubt about U.S. willingness and ability to insure Japanese security and has been concerned to establish good relations with China. Strengthened Japanese relations with Peking, a born-again appreciation of a strong security relationship with the United States, a new assertiveness in defense policy and international relations, and an emboldened disposition in dealings with the Soviet Union have markedly enlarged prospects for future confrontation between the USSR and Japan.

The buildup of Soviet armed forces in the Far East would seem to be explained by Moscow's desire for status as a global power, strengthened defenses against U.S. armed forces in the Pacific area, and conflict with China, not Soviet concern over Japan, which in earlier years sought to accommodate Moscow and strongly rejected an active role in international affairs. The intimidation of Japan is likely to have been behind Soviet military expansion in the Far East only insofar as this buildup was meant to obtain increased deference from nations in the region generally. Tokyo could not but be made anxious, however; for implicit in the deployment of more capable Soviet forces in the east is a much broadened threat of air attack upon Japan and interdiction of its seaborne commerce, upon which this resource-scarce trading nation is especially dependent. Soviet political-military operations, maritime

reconnaissance, naval exercises, enlarged deployments of ground units upon islands in the Kurile chain contested by Tokyo and close to Hokkaido, and Soviet interest to obtain regular access to naval and air facilities in Vietnam have given pointed meaning to the changed military climate in the region. Regular usage of Cam Ranh Bay by Soviet warships and of Vietnamese airfields by land-based naval aircraft could increase substantially the threat posed at a distance to shipping between Japan and the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Africa and Europe. Increased Soviet military strength in the Far East has not been tempered by reassuring U.S. behavior in the region; for in the past decade the United States has reduced the number of aircraft carriers based in the Western Pacific from three to two, withdrawn one division and announced the withdrawal of the remaining U.S. division in South Korea, pulled all of its forces out of Taiwan and Thailand, and encountered difficult relations with the Philippines which is repository to those remaining U.S. air and naval installations in Southeast Asia.

Largely as a result of these changes, but also reinforced by the expanded military capabilities of a number of nations in South and Southeast Asia, shocks caused by rapidly changed U.S. policies, and increased sensitivity to various situations of instability affecting Japan, Japanese attitudes toward arms and defense matters have changed. For one thing, the Self Defense Forces and Mutual Security Treaty with the United States have become substantially more popular; for another, much discussion has taken place about boosting the defense budget significantly. Other signs of change have included



the purchase of F-15 fighters having a potential for power projection and longer range antisubmarine patrol aircraft, a general blurring of the distinction between offensive and defensive forces, and a greater assertiveness by civilian officials and military professionals about what is requisite for defense, the role of the SDF, and conditions that would justify rearmament. In 1979 Prime Minister Masayoshi Ohira said he was disturbed by the USSR's 'energetic buildup of strength in the Far East', a comment echoing numerous other official statements to this effect; and aid to Vietnam was said to be conditional upon Hanoi's not allowing the Soviet Union base rights.<sup>16</sup> / These developments, backgrounded by Tokyo's unwillingness to go it alone with the USSR in developing Siberia after the United States decided not to go forward in this endeavor, and taken together with Japan's substantially improved relations with China (acutely symbolized by their 1978 treaty of friendship) have alarmed Soviet leaders, who now worry about U.S.-China-Japan alliance against the USSR in the east and not only about increased Chinese military capabilities, but also Japanese rearmament, notwithstanding the doubts of many Western observers that Japan is truly embarked on a course of gradual but significant expansion of the SDF's capabilities. For even if Tokyo does not for the moment intend this, as Henry Kissinger has argued, 'everyone knows that Japan could be a great military power very quickly'.<sup>17</sup> /

A curb by Moscow on the expansion of its military capabilities in the Far East does not appear likely as a strategem to obviate

Japanese interest in stronger defenses, reinforced security relations with the United States, and closer alignment with China. Instead the USSR has given signs of acting with a heavy hand and without sensitivity toward Japan, and overreacting--witness the 1978 naval exercises prior to the signing of the Sino-Japanese treaty of friendship, the Soviet deployment of airborne units and airfield construction on the disputed Kurile islands close to Hokkaido, and Moscow's bellicose thinking out loud--"Just you try"--about any Japanese attempt to seize the disputed islands by force.<sup>18</sup> / If this is so, then the USSR and Japan may be in the midst of a period of prolonged estrangement; the potential, but not necessarily prospective circuit-breakers of which are a disposition in Peking to improve relations with Moscow, a leveling off of Soviet deployments in the Far East, and a new found Soviet sensitivity toward Japan. New Soviet political-military operations to caution Tokyo in its behavior might be expected in the meantime.

#### Adventures by Communist Allies

Moscow has afforded Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea substantial diplomatic, economic and armaments support and feels a special responsibility for the maintenance of communist rule in these nations and their well-being. A Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance is in force with North Korea and in 1978 Moscow signed with Vietnam a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation. As to Cuba, Soviet leaders regard it as a matter of record that in return for the Soviet withdrawal of strategic missiles and nuclear bombers

ending the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, President Kennedy pledged the United States not to take military action against the Castro regime. An unprovoked attack or other threat presented to any one of these nations would place great pressure upon the USSR to provide them support including the demonstrative use of Soviet armed forces. Soviet policymakers have demonstrated repeatedly, however, that they will not seriously risk important USSR security interests for allies that have acted unilaterally and provocatively. The Kremlin has acted on the basis of self-interest, not out of loyalty, although some show of loyalty sometimes has been accorded in the service of important interests. Nor does Moscow compete with Peking in these matters: Sino-Vietnamese relations have been conflictive, Cuba is materially dependent upon the USSR, and Soviet leaders have shown themselves exceedingly wary of North Korean designs and willing to accept uneven relations with Pyongyang.

There is every reason to believe that the USSR would sit by militarily if North Korean armed forces attacked a U.S. military unit as occurred in 1968, 1969, and 1976 and the United States responded with limited military force, notwithstanding substantial Soviet intelligence monitoring of a U.S. naval force deployed into the Sea of Japan. Nor is the USSR likely to respond militarily to a U.S. threat to North Korea that followed a provocation by Pyongyang directed at South Korea. If Kim Il-sung allied North Korea with China against the USSR, Pyongyang might even be the target of Soviet military diplomacy. Still, the Kremlin probably would find

it difficult to avoid political-military action directed at the United States if Pyongyang initiated a major conflict with the South that led to a substantial threat being posed to the continuation of communist rule in North Korea; for a noncommunist regime in Pyongyang imposed by and dependent upon the United States would appear to threaten the security of the Soviet Far East and would constitute a huge ideological disaster. Chinese intervention averted these outcomes in 1950; conceivably in a new conflict, Chinese ground forces again might be deployed onto the Peninsula for the purpose of deterring invasion of North Korea, again making strong Soviet political-military behavior less necessary.

Aside from the reinforcement of capabilities in the Far East and possibly a call-up of reserves, the USSR probably would not respond militarily to retaliatory U.S. air attacks upon North Korea at a distance from the Soviet-North Korean border. Also doubtful is Soviet military support of a sudden drive south by North Korean forces to seize Seoul in 48-72 hours followed by a call by Pyongyang for a cease-fire and negotiations leading to reunification. To the extent Moscow sensed that the United States was prepared to accept this North Korean fait accompli it might perceive a certain value in appearing to have deterred American military action. The shrewder tactic--as in 1969 and in 1976--would be to avoid this role, however. For to become militarily involved in this way would gain few points with North Korea which, acutely sensitive to Moscow's timing, would recognize the Kremlin's essential

caution, while if this hesitancy was not perceived, Pyongyang might be encouraged to take even greater risks and envelop the USSR in a yet more dangerous situation. Soviet coercive diplomacy in this circumstance also would risk catalyzing a powerful Japanese rearmament effort as well as a reinforced U.S. military effort globally and serious damage to cooperative Soviet-U.S. behavior valued by the Kremlin. Moscow's interests would be served better by allowing Pyongyang to itself weaken the U.S. military presence in Northeast Asia and global image of the United States.

The form of a new U.S. military response following further substantial withdrawal from South Korea might be expected to be heavily naval to avoid a new emplacement of U.S. forces on the Peninsula that afterwards might be difficult to disband. This would afford flexibility, but it would not only be less likely to reassure South Korea and Japan, it also would be more likely to audience a Soviet political-military reaction unless that naval presence was very small or remained far from Soviet home waters. To avoid these pitfalls--of deploying forces anew to South Korea and staging a flypaper or pitiful naval presence--ground or air forces might instead be deployed to Japan and Guam, and naval forces based in Hawaii and Southeast Asian waters might be deployed to the northwestern Pacific, but yet not into the Sea of Japan, while Northeast Asian stationed warships were sent into the Yellow Sea.

Between Vietnam and China exist a wide range of deeply felt differences. In the wake of their conflict in 1979, no agreements

were reached promising an aversion of future violence between them. Vietnam retained its hold on Laos and Cambodia, continued its maltreatment of ethnic Chinese, and appeared even more dependent upon the USSR than it had been previously. China, meanwhile, made it clear that further "lessons" might have to be administered to Hanoi. Poor relations and exchanges of harsh words were the best that were expected by those favoring conciliation.

Moscow perceives China to be highly motivated in its hostility toward Vietnam and probably recognizes as dangers of any military embroilment, not only the risk of escalation and conflict with China, but also seriously complicated relations with the United States, Japan and Western Europe, and the encouragement of further provocative actions by Vietnam and other Soviet allies. Insofar as Peking has demonstrated a willingness to engage in large-scale violence against Vietnam, future threats and military deployments that it might make cannot be discounted easily as idle bluffing or a cloak to disguise weakness. Possibly Moscow would even allow China to overthrow the regime in Hanoi, considering the danger of escalation inherent in any substantial Sino-Soviet land conflict. Unlike North Korea, which butts the USSR, and fighting with the United States over the future of that land which might be restricted to a very limited area in Northeast Asia, Vietnam is distant from the USSR and military action able to prevent a Chinese march into Hanoi would likely have to include attacks upon targets in China. If the Kremlin was unwilling to go to war with China on behalf of Vietnam, it

nevertheless might feel compelled to orchestrate a multi-fold show of force aimed at deterring Peking from effecting this result; although the further down this road Moscow went, the more it would risk either being embarrassed as a result of the exposure of its bluff or becoming a committed party to the conflict because of its attempt at coercive diplomacy.

Prudently, China has made no claims against Vietnam implying subjugation. Instead, Peking has projected itself as responding in a delimited fashion to provocations by Hanoi, with the aim of causing the Vietnamese to curtail their pursuit of certain policies threatening or obnoxious to China. The actual use of force in response to apparently time-limited Chinese military action requires the Kremlin to accept large risks on behalf of an ally that is not seriously in danger without a substantial prospect of major gain.

While engagement in violent conflict with China over Vietnam would be difficult for the Kremlin to accept whatever the level of Sino-Vietnamese hostilities, the political use of Soviet armed forces recommends itself strongly in the event of limited conflict between China and Vietnam. Without taking very great risk, as in 1979, certain forces in the Soviet Far East can be made more ready as a caution to Peking against enlarging upon its objectives, and warships and reconnaissance aircraft can be deployed to the scene to afford Hanoi intelligence and a sense of larger support. Air transport of armaments also can provide political support, even if the distances that must be flown from Soviet Russia to Vietnam did not allow an

airlift immediately able to make up for Vietnamese losses in any serious conflict with China. Again, as in 1979, Moscow could presume that Peking would not lead the USSR to face a choice between embarrassment and war against China by intentionally relating its objectives to be limited and then attempting the overthrow of the Hanoi regime. If Peking was intent on the latter, it would be more sensible to allow the USSR as much room as possible to extract itself from its alliance with Vietnam.

Hanoi, after having fought wars of national liberation with France and the United States, cannot appreciate any arrangement allowing a permanent foreign military presence on its territory or in its waters; but, in a crisis, fear might impel an offer to Moscow of a degree of access that otherwise would not be proffered. Conceivably, something along this line occurred prior to or during the 1979 Sino-Vietnamese conflict and lay behind those limited Soviet political-military actions that took place then. For afterwards, Soviet naval aircraft were deployed to Vietnam and Soviet warships entered Vietnamese ports for the first time.

Regular unrestricted access by Soviet warships and aircraft to naval and air installations in Vietnam surely would be valuable to Moscow, and if the Kremlin may not consider these facilities worth war with China, but instead prefer to pay for this only with military and economic assistance, the promise of a long-term base arrangement or fear of its loss might occasion a special willingness to engage in coercive diplomacy, particularly if the Kremlin assessed Peking's behavior as



limited and highly attendant to Soviet actions.

Like North Korea and Vietnam, Moscow considers Cuba to be a permanent gain to the socialist movement and has made itself appear responsible for Cuban security, at least insofar as Havana refrains from unfavored actions provocative to the United States. The Kremlin is unlikely to become engaged in the Central America-Caribbean area as it has in Africa and Southwest Asia and probably would distance itself from Havana if Castro engaged in new revolutionary activity in this arena of the sort promoted in the early and mid-1960s. Like North Korea's seizure of the Pueblo, however, an unexpected initial provocation leading to a U.S. political-military response could nevertheless entrap the USSR which retains air defense units in Cuba (Soviet pilots flying Cuban-marked aircraft) and periodically deploys warships into the Caribbean.

Beyond verbal warnings the USSR also is unlikely to respond directly to an obviously demonstrative U.S. show of force directed at Cuba. In 1978 twenty-two U.S. and eleven British warships including the aircraft carrier Eisenhower carried out major exercises near Cuba while, at the same time, high altitude reconnaissance flights of the island were conducted. The latter may have been prompted only by the recent introduction into Cuba of nuclear capable MIG-23 aircraft, but the GULF EX-79 naval maneuvers seemed clearly related to Cuban activities in Africa. Implicitly the Carter administration meant to caution Havana against new military activities in Africa as well as perhaps the Middle East and Central America, and to pressure Cuban military withdrawal

from Africa. No Soviet political-military activity took place in response to this operation. Moscow limited itself to moderate reproval in Pravda, advising that no one will succeed in intimidating the patriots who are waging a just struggle against reaction and for social progress."19/ Rather Soviet political-military support for Cuba is most likely to take the form of preemptive deployments, as for example of pilots to assist Cuban air defense, together with arms transfers and periodic warship visits. Moscow understands well its conventional inferiority in the western Atlantic and the improbability of violent U.S. military action against Cuba. Hence its inclination is to downplay the significance of demonstrative U.S. action while acting in ways aimed at assuring Cuban confidence in the pursuit of joint actions favored by the USSR.

### The Third World

Soviet leaders have not engaged in overreaching and otherwise rash public rhetoric about intervention in the third world. Instead, Moscow's course has been to relate, more simply, that Soviet military power helps keep the peace and to offer expressions of general solidarity and support for third world favorites. Leaders in the former colonial lands and of insurgencies have not been led to expect either real or even symbolic help from Soviet fighting men.

Like the United States, the Kremlin too must increasingly worry about the military capabilities of third world antagonists which, in certain circumstances (including failure in a chain of command), might be prepared to violently engage Soviet military units. Soviet transport aircraft and even warships are not difficult targets for missiles and

precision-guided munitions, and the ability of Soviet military units to avoid detection in an age of electronic intelligence is near zero. For a Kara-class cruiser to be disabled, for example, would be a political disaster for the USSR, particularly insofar as Moscow counted on a cheap political triumph and was unwilling or unable to militarily respond. Even if the Kremlin is willing to act cynically and ruthlessly it may not appreciate the risk of embroilment in a military quagmire and its attendant political damage, and may lack the will and even the capability to deal decisively with its opposition.

Concerned to influence rather than subjugate, the USSR is highly sensitive to charges of neocolonialism and imperialism by third world nations. Concepts of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and regime legitimacy as well as a number of other norms at stake in interstate and domestic crises may not of themselves be the basis of Soviet behavior, but they are important to a large number of third world nations whose favor is important to the USSR. Hence, in addition to assessing Western interest and the risk of confrontation with the United States, the Kremlin is concerned to determine the attitudes of Afro-Asian nations whose perspective on intervention by outside powers may or may not share much in common with the West.

Sovereign third world nations with recognized regimes that do not act aggressively toward nations friendly with the USSR are very unlikely to be the target of Soviet political-military diplomacy. To act otherwise admits serious danger to Soviet standing regionally and among the nonaligned movement generally. Condemnation by the Organization of African Unity, the Arab League, the Association of

South East Asian Nations, let alone the U.N. General Assembly, is a disaster the Kremlin would not countenance for only a very local gain. Far from wanting to antagonize these memberships, the USSR contests strongly for their favor. With regional support a non-aligned nation probably also can act aggressively against at least an uncertain Soviet ally without stirring a military response by Moscow. Despite periodic divergence in policy, Moscow lent much support to the regime of Idi Amin in Uganda; and for armaments, the murderous Amin was dependent upon the USSR. Yet, when Tanzanian forces and Ugandan exiles invaded Uganda in 1979 with the uneasy blessing of a large number of OAU nations, the Kremlin watched quietly.

Nations allied with the West, in possession of valuable natural resources or suffering internal political weakness, may be subjected to covert action by the USSR, but unless they act militarily against a neighbor, it is doubtful Moscow would attempt coercive diplomacy against them. For this would threaten to reinforce their alliance with the West and induce a patron military response. Thus, for example, as long as the United States remains strongly interested in raw material rich Saudi Arabia and Zaire and France is willing to assist such internally weak nations as Djibouti, Chad, and the Central African Empire, these nations will need to concern themselves only with the weakness of their political institutions, the intentions of their neighbors, and perhaps Soviet guided covert action. Notwithstanding the USSR's strategic interest in Persian Gulf oil transit and the revolutionary fervor of South Yemen, Moscow will

doubtfully support a new Dhofar rebellion in Oman as overtly as it did in the early 1970s. Although Iran is not now able to act decisively, as it did in this earlier instance, heightened opposition by Saudi Arabia and Iraq as well as a very possibly strong U.S. reaction must be viewed as a powerful caution to the Kremlin if not to the PDRY.

In brief, Soviet leaders may have strong and varied reasons not to resort to coercive diplomacy in many situations of instability. Careful cost-benefit analyses are likely to be the source of decisions, not a "Can we do it? Then let's do it!" mentality. While other instrumentalities rather than Soviet armed forces units are likely to be preferred, many situations beckoning a Soviet political-military card are likely to be foregone.

Yet, considering the large number of external and internal conflicts and crises possible and continuing in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and southern Asia, policymakers in the Kremlin may be expected to encounter numerous requests for Soviet political-military support and perceive in other instances advantages that might be derived from discrete operations. The USSR surely is interested in increasing, not to say maintaining, its number of friends and supporters. Besides positive objectives, it is also engaged in a bitter rivalry with China and seeks to minimize the number of nations friendly toward the United States. Consequent to Soviet political-military support, Moscow might calculate, third world governments and movements engaged in conflict or crisis might be made more likely to favor Soviet positions

internationally, facilitate forward USSR military deployments, increase their trade with WTO nations, and see the USSR as a model to be emulated. The Kremlin also will be concerned to protect its personnel and property abroad. Looking at their past record, Soviet leaders can find enough success to justify new political-military operations in a number of circumstances.

Regularly abroad in third world nations and their claimed waters are large numbers of Soviet economic and military advisers, naval and commercial vessels and their seamen, Aeroflot planes and their crews, and Soviet personnel attached to diplomatic missions. All are potential hostages and targets of both sovereign nations and insurgent groups. Attacks, seizures or other threats to Soviet personnel or property overseas will include a serious prospect of generating a political-military response, particularly by warships as occurred following Ghana's seizure of two Soviet trawlers in 1969. Although the USSR does not want to be accused of gunboat diplomacy, it also is concerned to insure the future security of its citizens and property abroad and respect for itself as a great power. To the extent that nonaligned nations perceive the Kremlin innocent of causal wrongdoing and Moscow's antagonist thereby lacks a foundation for grievance, Soviet policymakers may be particularly inclined to coercive diplomacy. What is a more likely prospect, though, is that there would be a degree of ambiguity about Soviet innocence. Although this probably would cause the USSR some hesitation, it is doubtful that Moscow could refrain from some show of force if a Soviet vessel akin to the Pueblo

was seized or an intelligence gathering aircraft was shot down while exercising a right of "innocent" transit.

A general circumstance stimulating discrete Soviet operations in the third world, and one to be expected more frequently than hostility directed at Soviet personnel and property abroad, is domestic instability threatening the future of a regime friendly to the USSR. While those regimes in Angola and Ethiopia, for example, face continuing insurgencies other Soviet allies can probably expect to experience attempts by disgruntled military men to seize power, ethnic insurgency and general social unrest. A related stimulus is political change that brings into power a regime which looks to the USSR for support. Moscow may not attempt to terminate a regime by political-military diplomacy and would have little option than to accept a fait accompli ending the rule of an ally. Lending support to an anxious friend or one which has just dealt with a threatened coup or recently seized power is quite different, however, for this Soviet action comes at the request of a recognized government of a sovereign nation that is seeking to insure a status quo. Special ship visits are most likely, but also possible are the military air transport of armaments and the visit, where logistics are possible, of a small number of Soviet combat aircraft. These actions plus the combat deployment of small numbers of tactical aircraft, helicopters, and light transport planes are conceivable in response to a serious insurgent threat to an important third world friend, notwithstanding Moscow's preference to merely supply aircraft and helicopters and have them piloted by recipient personnel, other third world citizens, Cubans,

or other allied military men. Also mitigating against the need for Soviet political-military support are the increased number of mutual security agreements between third world nations which allow new nations to call upon regional allies in crises, as Guinea helped Liberia maintain order in response to rioting in 1979.20/

Soviet armed forces also might be used to support nations suffering aggression at the hands of Western or Chinese allies or essentially outcast nations (for example, South Africa). Two different types of countries are to be distinguished here: long-time regional allies with noncommunist "socialist" regimes, such as Syria, Iraq, India and Guinea, which, despite important differences with Moscow, can probably count upon strong Kremlin interest in averting their drawing away from the USSR and closer to the West; and nations that more recently have become dependent upon the USSR--for example, Angola, Ethiopia and South Yemen--whose regimes exude fresh revolutionary rhetoric and at least the trappings of Marxist-Leninist organization. Potential antagonists of the first group are at least as long-standing as the latter's ties with the USSR. Despite current quiescence in their hostility, heightened antagonism or renewed conflict is plausible, for example, between Syria and Israel, India and Pakistan, and Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Moscow's newer allies have been involved in serious interstate conflict more recently yet. Notwithstanding their modus vivendi, Angola and Zaire maintain uneasy relations with each other. South African dominated Namibia also remains a threat to Luanda. And if Somalia does not invade Ethiopia so soon again, hateful relations between Addis Ababa and Sudan



persist; while on the other side of the Red Sea, South Yemen could, by pushing the other Yemen or Oman too far, cause a Saudi or U.S. supported reaction endangering the regime in Aden.

While the protection of the status quo will motivate the defensive support given to allies, Moscow also retains interest in acquiring new situations of relative advantage. States having close relations with the West or nonaligned nations also may turn to the USSR out of desperation if their Western friends and neighbors appear immobilized in response to requests by them for support. A very large number of nonaligned and non-Soviet allied nations may prospectively dispute bordering lands in the pursuit of raw materials, better transit routes, ethnic unity, or old-fashioned empire. If a nation on the defensive concludes that all is lost otherwise--that is, neither its allies, the relevant regional authority or the United Nations are prepared to effectively defend its interests--turning to the USSR for succor may appear a necessity. Offered the opportunity to defend a nation's territorial integrity, what Moscow would be interested in are the prospective gains and the level of effort necessary to compel an end to the aggression being directed at that prospective client. Here, as with an ongoing insurgency, it would be important whether the recipient armed forces needed only armaments, logistics support and morale reinforcement, or the assistance of foreign firepower. Although the latter may be necessary and considered desirable by Moscow, the Kremlin probably will remain concerned not to deploy Red Army men or any large number of Frontal Aviation pilots in the third world; hence Soviet dependence upon the availability of Cuban

or other acceptable military men for combat chores. Havana and other Soviet allies may be in agreement with Moscow in some instances, but in others their differing interests and objectives may make them unwilling to become engaged militarily on behalf of a prospective Soviet ally.

Southern Africa presents a special case of insurgencies aimed at ending white domination. In the absence of peaceful accommodations between SWAPO and South Africa and its clients over Namibia, and between the current Zimbabwe-Rhodesia authorities, the Patriotic Front, and the Frontline states, the possibility will continue to exist of an expanded Soviet political-military role in these affairs. Despite the desire of neighboring African nations to limit the role of the USSR in determining the future course of southern Africa, and forboding in Havana and among other allies of the USSR about engaging South African armed forces in sustained combat, prospective circumstances may usher coercive operations by Soviet military units. A noncompromising attitude or wholly cynical behavior by Pretoria over political change in Namibia, new attacks by South African military units upon Angola or their entry into the Zimbabwe conflict, the unwillingness of the new regime in Salisbury to go further in reconstituting the political system of Zimbabwe or, alternatively, to offer concessions to the Patriotic Front, or an escalation of attacks by Salisbury forces upon their neighbors' territory and Western support for South Africa or an outcast Zimbabwe all increase the prospect of the Frontline states becoming more open to a heightened Soviet role for two general reasons: first, to insure their sovereignty and the security of their citizens and property, and to deter attack; and, second, to reinforce the pressure upon their antagonists to

compromise.

Doubtfully would the Frontline nations quickly welcome Soviet helicopter or tactical transport aircraft support, let alone ground-based air defense units, fighter aircraft, or Red Army troops. But faced with strong adversity, one or more of those states might appreciate an expanded number of ship visits, a naval presence or the military air transport from the USSR of armaments as warning to their regional adversaries and supporters of the latter in the West. The development of serious interstate conflict between a Frontline nation and Zimbabwe or South Africa might well open the way to a Soviet ground or air combat presence, insofar as this support was considered essential to national security and was unable to be obtained from Cuba or another nation with nonaligned credentials. Words like the following taken from a 1978 government statement on Africa may be expected to justify Soviet activism generally:

One cannot fail to see the principal difference between the assistance given by socialist countries to the states and peoples of Africa and the armed interference in the internal affairs of Africa practiced in reality by Western countries in their narrow, selfish interests. The assistance given by socialist countries serves the just cause of the liberation of the peoples from racist-colonialist slavery and the cause of protecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states from outside encroachments. The Soviet people is rightly proud of its assistance to these lofty aims.

Detente by no means implies an artificial restriction of objective processes of historical development. It is not a charter of immunity for anti-popular, corrupt and venal regimes, for any whatsoever special rights and privileges inherited from the colonial past or obtained under unequal deals and agreements, 21/

Threats of U.S. military diplomacy, arms transfers, and covert action are obvious potential instruments that might be utilized to preclude discrete Soviet political-military operations in the third world; and in some instances they may command the support of U.S. national authorities and seem sensible. On other occasions, however, they may appear politically infeasible or counterproductive to U.S. interests. And even when these tools may seem necessary, they nevertheless may not be sufficient. Moreover, while it does not make sense to allow the USSR and its allies confidence that the United States will refrain from forceful intervention and that they can engage in political-military diplomacy unilaterally, it also is wise to make use of other means that are available to bar and constrain Kremlin resort to the military as its means of obtaining objectives. Other avenues open if a crisis begins to loom are: 1) to support regional political solutions and peacekeeping actions; 2) to offer verbal commitments of non-U.S. military intervention contingent upon similar Soviet restraint, and declarations to withhold support from extra-regional U.S. allies that might intervene if extra-regional Soviet allies do not become involved; 3) to make clear to U.S. allies and others who might turn to the United States that they should not be confident of U.S. support if they engage in aggression; and 4) to draw attention to potential violations of sovereignty and other international norms by the USSR if it was necessary for the Kremlin to make use of certain air and even sea routes.

If actions such as these might be seized upon in the instance of an imminent crisis, their utility might be greatly enhanced by seriously

attending to them as part of a longer-term strategy. In this the United States could embark upon a campaign offering the third world a choice between the security of their territorial integrity and orientation of nonalignment on the one hand, and superpower intervention and trampling upon their affairs or ones close to them on the other. To support regional political solutions and peacekeeping, delimitations upon alliance support, declarations of conditional nonintervention, and the building of mutual interest in respect for the sovereignty of airspace and innocent passage at sea, the United States also can attempt to reduce the dependency of Soviet allies upon the USSR and caution Moscow against the conclusion that Soviet military behavior in the third world does not influence U.S. global alliance policy and defense spending, and the climate of varied negotiations and other cooperative superpower behavior. Finally, advantage might be seen in the negotiation of mutual withdrawal or restraint in deployments of U.S. and Soviet naval and perhaps other forces in selected regions that might come to include the Mediterranean, south Atlantic, Indian Ocean, sub-Saharan Africa, the southern ring of Asia and South America. American policymakers and some foreign nations appreciate a great deal the forward presence of U.S. forces or sometime ease with which they can be inserted into a region. However, if the United States wishes to avoid intervention and confrontation and yet does not want to witness Soviet political-military diplomacy, the course of wisdom may be to pursue a path of at least selective mutual restraint that would raise the threshold to Moscow's use of armed forces as a political instrument.

Footnotes

1. Memorandum circulated by The Washington Center of Foreign Policy Research, December 8, 1978, p.4.
2. Committee on the Present Danger, "Is America Becoming Number 2? Current Trends in the U.S.-Soviet Military Balance" (Washington, D.C.: CPD, October 5, 1978), p.23.
3. Robert P. Berman and John Baker, "Soviet Strategic Forces and U.S. Security" (manuscript prepared at the Brookings Institution, March 1978), pp. III/58-61.
4. Statement by John Sternbruner to the House Committee on Armed Services, February 7, 1979, pp. 3-5.
5. Memorandum cited in footnote number one.
6. See Richard Lowenthal, "Why German Stability is So Insecure: On the Self-Awareness of the Bonn Republic," Encounter, vol. 51 (December 1978), pp. 32-36.
7. Current U.S. planning includes a 24 hour time cycle to obtain permission and to communicate a decision to use tactical nuclear weapons. Department of the Army, Headquarters, Field Manual No. 100-5 (DOA, July 1, 1976), pp. 9-10. In terms of current deployments, a Soviet offensive might aim to isolate the Bundeswehr's I Corps, encircle its II and III Corps and perhaps the British Army "on the Rhine," and finally seize the Ruhr complex, including or excluding Bonn. The U.S. Seventh Army is deployed in southern West Germany.
8. New York Times, November 15, 1978.
9. "Mass Demilitarization for Finland," Soviet World Outlook (monthly report of Advanced International Studies Institute), vol. 4 (April 16, 1979), p.40.

10. New York Times, March 20 and 21, 1979.
11. Kenneth A. Myers, "North Atlantic Security: The Forgotten Flank?," The Washington Papers, vol. 6, No. 62, p. 57. Pieces of the aircraft and the "black box" were eventually recovered by Norwegian authorities on the island of Hopen.
12. Izvestiya, April 6, 1979, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (April 10, 1979), pp. G9-10.
13. Adam Roberts, Nations in Arms: The Theory and Practice of Territorial Defence (Chatto and Windus, 1976), p.217.
14. Pravda, November 19, 1978, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (November 20, 1978), p. F1; Robert Moss, "Who's Meddling in Iran," The New Republic (December 2, 1978), p. 16.
15. International Institute of Strategic Studies, The Military Balance, 1978-1979 (IISS, 1978), p. 57.
16. New York Times, April 20, 1979.
17. Interview in Yomiuri Shimbun, cited in Baltimore Sun, March 5, 1979.
18. Pravda, March 27, 1979, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (March 29, 1979), p. C1.
19. Pravda, November 24, 1978, in FBIS, Daily Report; Soviet Union, vol. 3 (November 28, 1978), p. N1.
20. New York Times, April 18, 1979.
21. Tass, June 22, 1978, in FBIS, Daily Report: Soviet Union, vol. 3 (June 23, 1978), p. H3.

A 1

## APPENDICES



## Appendix A

A-12

LIST OF INCIDENTS

<u>Case Number and Political Context</u>	<u>Month/Year USSR Forces First Used</u>	<u>Brookings File Number</u>
1. Accession of parts of Finland to USSR	June 1944	16
2. Accession of eastern Poland to USSR	June 1944	15
3. Political future of Poland	July 1944	2
4. Accession of northern Bukovina and Bessarabia to USSR	August 1944	17
5. Political future of Rumania	August 1944	3
6. Political future of Bulgaria	September 1944	1
7. Political future of Hungary	October 1944	4
8. Accession of Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia to USSR	October 1944	18
9. Political future of Czechoslovakia	January 1945	9
10. Accession of East Prussia to USSR	January 1945	21
11. Political future of Germany	January 1945	6
12. Political future of Austria	March 1945	7
13. Accession of southern Sakhalin and Kurile Islands to USSR	August 1945	20
14. Political future of China	August 1945	22
15. Acquisition of special rights in Port Arthur and Dairen	August 1945	19
16. Political future of Korea	August 1945	5
17. Economic influence in Manchuria	November 1945	23
18. Political future of Bornholm Is.	November 1945	174
19. Communist regime established in northern Iran	December 1945	26
20. Withdrawal from Czechoslovakia	December 1945	8

<u>Case Number and Political Context</u>	<u>Month/Year USSR Forces First Used</u>	<u>Brookings File Number</u>
21. Security of Port Arthur and Dairen	February 1946	25
22. Dispute over Turkish provinces and Dardanelles	March 1946	27
23. Withdrawal from China	March 1946	14
24. Withdrawal from Bornholm Is.	March 1946	175
25. Sovietization of North Korea	July 1946	13
26. Occupation of Haiyang Island	March 1947	29
27. Relations with Iran	August 1947	28
28. Sovietization of Hungary	September 1947	12
29. Sovietization of Poland	September 1947	10
30. Sovietization of Rumania	September 1947	11
31. Future of West Germany and Berlin	January 1948	139
32. Communist coup in Czechoslovakia	February 1948	30
33. Future of West Germany and Berlin	March 1948	115
34. Future of West Germany and Berlin	June 1948	116
35. Relations with Denmark	September 1948	165
36. Withdrawal from North Korea	October 1948	154
37. Civil war in China	October 1948	24
38. Relations with Iran	October 1948	31
39. Security of North Korea	Early? 1949	33
40. Relations with Iran	May 1949	147
41. Relations with Yugoslavia	August 1949	32
42. Rearmament of West Germany	January 1950	117
43. Seizure of West Berlin territory	September 1950	173

<u>Case Number and Political Context</u>	<u>Month/Year USSR Forces First Used</u>	<u>Brookings File Number</u>
44. Security of China	October 1950	34
45. Security of North Korea	? 1951	179
46. Seizure of West Berlin territory	January 1951	118
47. Security of regime in Czechoslovakia	February 1951	138
48. Security of regime in Albania	March 1951	38
49. Political crisis in Iran	June 1951	40
50. Rearmament of West Germany	August 1951	144
51. Yugoslavia's relations with West	September 1951	86
52. Rearmament of West Germany	January 1952	119
53. Japan - U.S. relationship	June 1952	39
54. Relations with Sweden	June 1952	164
55. Yugoslavia's relations with West	July 1952	137
56. Rearmament of West Germany	October 1952	105
57. Rearmament of West Germany	March 1953	148
58. USSR relaxation of controls in Austria	June 1953	171
59. Peace offensive-Great Britain	June 1953	129
60. Demonstrations in East Berlin	June 1953	120
61. Security of Bulgaria	October 1953	35
62. Relations with Albania	May 1954	142
63. Restoration of controls in Austria	June 1954	172
64. Relations with Sweden	July 1954	141
65. Austria State Treaty	May 1955	151
66. Withdrawal from Port Arthur and Dairen	May 1955	153
67. Withdrawal from Porkkala (Finland)	October 1955	152

<u>Case Number and Political Context</u>	<u>Month/Year USSR Forces First Used</u>	<u>Brookings File Number</u>
68. Relations with Great Britain	October 1955	145
69. Security of regime in East Germany	December 1955	36
70. Relations with Japan	January 1956	135
71. Relations with Yugoslavia	May 1956	155
72. Relations with China	June 1956	156
73. Political demonstrations in Poland	June 1956	43
74. Government change in Poland	October 1956	44
75. Crisis in Hungary	October 1956	46
76. Security of regime in Rumania	October 1956	45
77. Security of regime in East Germany	October 1956	42
78. Crisis in Hungary	November 1956	47
79. Security of regime in Poland	November 1956	41
80. Security of regime in Bulgaria	November 1956	37
81. Western presence in Berlin	November 1956	146
82. Security of regime in Hungary	March 1957	50
83. Security of regime in Syria	September 1957	48
84. Security of regime in Syria	October 1957	49
85. Western presence in Berlin	October 1957	121
86. Western presence in Berlin	January 1958	149
87. Relations with Poland	May 1958	93
88. Withdrawal from Rumania	May 1958	161
89. U.S. intervention in Lebanon	July 1958	51
90. Western presence in Berlin	November 1958	122

<u>Case Number and Political Context</u>	<u>Month/Year USSR Forces First Used</u>	<u>Brookings File Number</u>
91. Western presence in Berlin	February 1959	123
92. Relations with Iran	March 1959	56
93. Insurgency in Indonesia	November 1959	163
94. Crisis in Congo	July 1960	52
95. Crisis in Congo	September 1960	53
96. Western presence in Berlin	September 1960	150
97. Crisis in Laos	December 1960	54
98. Western presence in Berlin	July 1961	124
99. Indonesia ~ Netherlands conflict over West Irian	? 1962	167
100. Crisis in Laos	January 1962	55
101. Western presence in Berlin	February 1962	125
102. Emplacement of missiles in Cuba	July 1962	57
103. Cuban missile crisis	October 1962	58
104. Relations with Laos	December 1962	177
105. Western presence in Berlin	April 1963	126
106. Western presence in Berlin	October 1963	127
107. Cyprus crisis	June 1964	133
108. Insurgency in Congo	December 1964	59
109. Border dispute with China	? 1965	61
110. Bundestag meets in West Berlin	April 1965	128
111. Relations with France	October 1966	162
112. Border dispute with China	February 1967	62
113. Egypt-Israel political crisis	May 1967	64
114. Arab-Israeli war	June 1967	65
115. Post Arab-Israeli war hostilities	June 1967	66

<u>Case Number and Political Context</u>	<u>Month/Year USSR Forces First Used</u>	<u>Brookings File Number</u>
116. Relations with Sweden	August 1967	166
117. Relations with Spain	October 1967	159
118. Israeli ship <u>Eilat</u> sunk	October 1967	67
119. Insurgency in North Yemen	November 1967	60
120. Seizure of U.S.S. <u>Pueblo</u> by North Korea	January 1968	68
121. Relations with Czechoslovakia	March 1968	69
122. Relations with Czechoslovakia	May 1968	70
123. Insurgency in South Yemen	June 1968	160
124. Relations with Czechoslovakia	July 1968	71
125. Relations with Czechoslovakia- invasion	August 1968	72
126. Relations with Rumania	August 1968	76
127. Security of regime in Czechoslovakia	October 1968	73
128. Seizure of Soviet trawlers by Ghana	February 1969	78
129. West Germany federal election in West Berlin	March 1969	130
130. Border dispute with China	March 1969	63
131. Relations with Czechoslovakia	March 1969	74
132. U.S. EC-121 aircraft downed by North Korea	April 1969	75
133. Security of Cuba	July 1969	112
134. Relations with Cambodia	December 1969	158
135. Security of regime in Somalia	December 1969	77
136. Insurgency in Sudan	? 1970	85
137. Security of Egypt	February 1970	80

<u>Case Number and Political Context</u>	<u>Month/Year USSR Forces First Used</u>	<u>Brookings File Number</u>
138. Security of regime in Somalia	April 1970	81
139. Relations with France	May 1970	136
140. Cease-fire in Middle East	Autumn 1970	113
141. Jordan-PLO-Syria conflict	September 1970	79
142. U.S. reaction to USSR submarine tender in Cuba	September 1970	111
143. Relations with Yugoslavia	October 1970	143
144. West Germany-USSR treaty	October 1970	131
145. Demonstrations in Poland	December 1970	178
146. Security of Guinea	December 1970	82
147. West German political visits to Berlin	January 1971	140
148. Insurgency in Sri Lanka	April 1971	87
149. Security of regime in Sierra Leone	May 1971	83
150. Relations with France	June 1971	157
151. Relations with Rumania	June 1971	132
152. India-Pakistan war	December 1971	84
153. Security of regime in Somalia	January 1972	89
154. Relations with Bangladesh	April 1972	88
155. Relations with Egypt	May 1972	170
156. U.S. response to N. Vietnam Easter offensive	May 1972	90
157. Dhofar rebellion in Oman	? 1973	101
158. Relations with Iran	January 1973	92
159. Assassination of PAIGC (Port.-Guinea insurgents) leader	January 1973	100

<u>Case Number and Political Context</u>	<u>Month/Year USSR Forces First Used</u>	<u>Brookings File Number</u>
160. Arab-Israeli conflict	April 1973	96
161. Iraq-Kuwait dispute	April 1973	91
162. Cod War between Great Britain and Iceland	May 1973	95
163. Arab-Israeli war - 1	October 1973	103
164. Arab-Israeli war - 2	October 1973	104
165. Relations with Italy	October 1973	168
166. Kurdish problem in Iraq	? 1974	94
167. Cyprus conflict	July 1974	98
168. Clearing of Suez Canal	July 1974	99
169. Relations with Yugoslavia	September 1974	97
170. Syria-Israel conflict	November 1974	134
171. Border dispute with China	November 1974	114
172. Conflict in Angola	March 1975	106
173. Relations with United States	May 1975	110
174. Barents Sea dispute with Norway	September 1975	180
175. Conflict in Angola	November 1975	107
176. Algeria - Morocco - Polisario dispute	January 1976	181
177. Conflict in Lebanon-U.S. evacuation	June 1976	176
178. Relations with Italy	September 1976	169
179. Ethiopia-Somalia war	November 1977	108
180. Western presence in Berlin	January 1978	102
181. Security of Cuba	February 1978	109



<u>Case Number and Political Context</u>	<u>Month/Year USSR Forces First Used</u>	<u>Brockings File Number</u>
182. Relations with China	April 1978	182
183. Relations with China	May 1978	183
184. China-Vietnam conflict	June 1978	184
185. Relations with Japan	June 1978	185
186. China-Vietnam conflict	August 1978	186
187. China-Vietnam war	February 1979	187

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